

Hunting & Trapping in Virginia

July 2004-June 2005
Regulations and Information



©John R. Ford

This booklet is for general information. Specific laws are found in the Code of Virginia or the Game Department Regulation Manual. For answers to specific questions about hunting or trapping contact the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. See page 3 for the office nearest you.

About the Department

Serving the outdoor public for 88 years, the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries continues to move forward with renewed vigor and an encouraging sense of accomplishment.

Thanks to the efforts of the Department's wildlife biologists and game wardens, the state boasts a deer population of nearly one million animals and the most liberal deer hunting seasons ever known in the Commonwealth. Last season hunters harvested over 200,000 deer. Turkey and bear populations are also higher than any time since people have been keeping such records.

It takes work to maintain a plentiful supply of wildlife. Multiple wildlife projects are ongoing, and hundreds of jobs happen every day that often go unnoticed. The Department maintains over 1,000 miles of road and keeps up with more than 5,000 informational signs, along with 195,000 acres of land on 34 management areas that are kept open and in good condition for public use. The Department also works cooperatively with the U.S. Forest Service to help manage over one and a half million acres of wildlife habitat on national forest lands in Virginia.

A big part of Virginia's wildlife abundance results from the work of Virginia game wardens. Wardens annually check over 54,000 hunters, more than 75,000 anglers, and at least 30,000 boaters as they patrol over 3 million miles annually.

Virginia's Hunter Education program is recognized as one of the best in the nation with more than 15,000 students certified each year. Hunter Education courses are taught free of charge throughout the Commonwealth by game wardens and over 700 volunteer instructors.

All of this work to keep wildlife abundant in Virginia is paid for by the hunters and anglers themselves. The Department receives the majority of its funds from hunting and fishing licenses and boat titling and registration fees.

Be sure to buy your 2004–2005 hunting license before going afield. We wish you safe hunting.

Working Together For Our Wildlife

The Department is pleased and honored to have the support of numerous non-profit conservation organizations that are dedicated to wildlife conservation and education. Through the involvement of thousands of citizen volunteers, as well as a financial commitment to a variety of agency projects, organizations such as the ones listed below have supported wildlife conservation efforts that benefit all Virginia sportsmen and women. We encourage everyone to support these organizations and to become active participants in one or more of these groups.

Recognized for 2004-2005 are the following:

Ducks Unlimited www.ducks.org	Traditional Bowhunters of Virginia
Izaak Walton League of America www.iwla.org	Virginia Bear Hunters Association www.virginiabearhunters.org
National Wild Turkey Federation www.vanwtf.com	Virginia Bowhunters Association www.geocities.com/~vbarchers
Quail Unlimited www.qu.org	Virginia Deer Hunters Association www.virginiadeerhunters.org
Quality Deer Management www.qdma.com	Virginia Peninsula Sportsmen's Association www.vpsa.org
Ruffed Grouse Society www.ruffedgrousesociety.org	Virginia Trappers Association www.virginiatrappers.org
Safari Club International Foundation www.safariclub.org	Waterfowl USA www.waterfowlusa.org
Suburban Whitetail Management of Northern Virginia www.swmnv.com	Western Virginia Deer Hunters Association

Mission Statement

To manage Virginia's wildlife and inland fish to maintain optimum populations of all species to serve the needs of the Commonwealth; to provide opportunity for all to enjoy wildlife, inland fish, boating and related outdoor recreation; to promote safety for persons and property in connection with boating, hunting and fishing.

Commonwealth of Virginia

Mark R. Warner, Governor

Secretary of Natural Resources

W. Tayloe Murphy, Jr.

Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

William L. Woodfin, Jr. Director

Members of the Board

Daniel A. Hoffler, Chairman

Cecil T. Campbell	Richard L. Corrigan	Sherry Smith Crumley	
Charles H. Cunningham	C. Marshall Davison	Dan R. McCoy	Will McNeely
John W. Montgomery, Jr.	Richard E. Railey, Jr.	Jack T. Shoosmith	

Following are addresses and telephone numbers for each of the five regional offices and the Richmond headquarters. If you need assistance, contact the respective office.

Williamsburg - Region 1

5806 Mooretown Road
Williamsburg, VA 23188
(757) 253-7072

Includes the counties of Accomack, Charles City, Essex, Gloucester, Greensville, Isle of Wight, James City, King George, King & Queen, King William, Lancaster, Mathews, Middlesex, New Kent, Northampton, Northumberland, Prince George, Richmond, Southampton, Surry, Sussex, Westmoreland and York and the cities of Chesapeake, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach and Williamsburg.



Forest - Region 2

1132 Thomas Jefferson Road
Forest, VA 24551-9223
(434) 525-7522

Includes the counties of Amelia, Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, Botetourt, Brunswick, Buckingham, Campbell, Charlotte, Cumberland, Dinwiddie, Franklin, Halifax, Henry, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nelson, Nottoway, Patrick, Pittsylvania, Prince Edward and Roanoke and the cities of Petersburg, Lynchburg and Roanoke.

Marion - Region 3

1796 Highway Sixteen
Marion, VA 24354
(276) 783-4860

Includes the counties of Bland, Buchanan, Carroll, Craig, Dickenson, Floyd, Giles, Grayson, Lee, Montgomery, Pulaski, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise and Wythe.

Verona - Region 4

517 Lee Highway
P.O. Box 996
Verona, VA 24482
(540) 248-9360

Includes the counties of Alleghany, Augusta, Bath, Clarke, Frederick, Highland, Page, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Shenandoah and Warren.

Fredericksburg - Region 5

1320 Belman Road
Fredericksburg, VA 22401
(540) 899-4169

Includes the counties of Albemarle, Caroline, Chesterfield, Culpeper, Fairfax, Fauquier, Fluvanna, Goochland, Greene, Hanover, Henrico, Loudoun, Louisa, Madison, Orange, Powhatan, Prince William, Rappahannock, Spotsylvania and Stafford and the cities of Alexandria, Arlington, Charlottesville, Fredericksburg and Richmond.

Richmond Headquarters

P.O. Box 11104, 4010 West Broad St., Richmond, VA 23230-1104
804/367-1000 V/TDD

To reach Law Enforcement 24 hours, call 804-367-1258.

www.dgif.virginia.gov

Table of Contents

Department Offices	3	Bear Hound Training	24
What's New For 2004-2005	5	Counties With Bear Check Stations	24
Hunting Licenses and Permits		Deer	
License Requirements	5	Bag Limits	25
Mandatory Hunter Education Requirements	6	Special Youth Antlerless Deer Regulation	25
License Information and Fees	6	Bonus Deer Permits	25
How To Obtain a License	6	Archery	25
Archery/Muzzleloading License Requirements	7	Muzzleloading	26
Definitions		Firearms	28
Hunting and Trapping	8	Elk	30
Game and Furbearer Species	8	Turkey	
Nuisance Species	8	Bag limits	31
Other Wildlife	8	Archery	31
Dismal Swamp Line	8	Fall Firearms	31
West & East of Blue Ridge	8	Spring Gobbler	32
Waterfowl/Migratory Game Birds	8	Electronic Calls	32
Public Hunting Lands		Small Game Hunting Seasons	
Department Wildlife Management Areas	9	Crow	32
Recreational Opportunities on WMA's	10	Groundhog	32
Rules for Wildlife Management Areas	11	Grouse	32
National Forests	12	Quail & Pheasants	32
Regulations Specific to National Forest/Game		Rabbit	33
Department Land	12	Squirrel	
Access Roads	12	Archery	33
Camping Policy	12	Firearms	33
Structures	12	Furbearer Seasons	
Tree Stands	12	Bobcat	33
Unauthorized Feeding	12	Coyote	33
Shooting Preserves	13	Fox	
State Forests	13	Hunting with dogs and guns	33
State Parks	13	Hunting with dogs only	34
Federal Refuges	13	Opossum	34
Military Areas	13	Raccoon	
National Parks	13	Firearms	34
General Hunting Regulations		Chase Season	34
Blaze Orange Requirements	14	Skunk	34
Hunting Hours	14	Furbearer Trapping Seasons	
Hunting With Dogs	14	General Regulations	34
Training Dogs	14	Seasons	35
Legal Use of Firearms and Archery Equipment	14	Calendar	36
Crossbows	15	Hunting and Trapping Annual	37
Unlawful Methods	15	Black Bear Management	39
Sunday Hunting	15	White-tailed Deer Management	40
Hunting On Private Property	16	Two Deer Diseases Hunters Should Know About	42
All Terrain Vehicle Regulations	17	Small Game	43
Local Firearms Ordinances, Laws and Regulations	17	Wild Turkey Management	44
Bear, Deer, and Turkey Tag Validation and Checking		2004-2005 Quota Hunts	46
Requirements	20	Application for 2004 RAAP Deer Hunt	48
Big Game Hunting Seasons		2004-2005 Hunting Season Quota Hunt Application	49
Bear		2004-2005 Managed Hunts and Workshops	50
Bag Limit	22	Public Ranges	52
Archery	22	Outreach Programs and Events	53
Muzzleloading	22	Habitat Programs Available	54
Firearms	23	2004-2005 Hunting Seasons Quick Reference	55
		Sunrise-Sunset Chart	56
		Virginia Wildlife Catalog	59

What's New For 2004-2005

Digest Format :

Our second year presenting the hunting and trapping digest in this new format also brings with it more information and a new section entitled "Hunting and Trapping Annual 2004-2005." In this section we highlight our wildlife management projects and related issues.

Deer Bag Limits:

The license year bag limit for all hunters has been increased by two deer (antlerless deer only). See page 25.

Licenses:

Legislation passed in 2004 exempts the spouses of children and grandchildren of resident or non-resident landowners from having to obtain a license to hunt, trap or fish if doing so on the landowner's property. See page 6

Legislation passed in 2004 established license fees for non-resident youth who wish to hunt in Virginia. See page 7.

New Regulation Review Process:

The Department has changed the process of setting regulations for fish and wildlife into a single review process. The first combined review is scheduled for the March, August and October 2005 Board meetings. Regulation amendments made then will take effect in July 2006. See page 63.

Tagging and Checking Procedures:

Beginning in the fall of 2004, tags on the bear, deer, turkey license (commonly known as the Big Game license) will be non-detachable. **Instead of removing a tag and placing it on the carcass, successful hunters will only have to cut out the appropriate section (notch) of the license tag prior to moving the animal.** See page 20.

Successful hunters in 2004-2005 will also have a toll free number **1-866- GOT GAME (468-4263)** available to them for checking in their deer and spring turkey kill instead of taking them to a check station. **Elk, fall turkeys and bear cannot be checked by phone.** Hunters will continue to have the option of taking their game to a check station. See page 20.

Hunters must have a check card from a check station to enter an animal in Virginia Big Game Contests. See page 30.

Hunter Education Courses

After August 1, 2004, Hunter Education Class listings will be available by calling toll free 1-866-604-1122. See page 6.

Hunting Licenses and Permits

Those Who Can Buy a Resident License Are:

- (1) persons who have been a bonafide resident of the city, county, or state for six consecutive months immediately preceding the date of application for license;
- (2) persons who have been domiciliary residents of the state for at least two months upon approval of a completed affidavit to be furnished by the Game Department;
- (3) legal voters in Virginia;
- (4) members of the armed forces if they reside in the Commonwealth and are on active duty and are stationed at military installations within, or on ships based in the Commonwealth;
- (5) students (including nonresident students boarding on campus) residing in Virginia who are enrolled in bonafide Virginia schools;
- (6) unnaturalized owners of real property in Virginia who have resided in a county for five years immediately prior to making application for a license may apply for resident licenses only in the county where they qualify.

Every person who is required to have a license must carry such license and shall show the license immediately upon demand of any officer whose duty it is to enforce the game and inland fish laws, or upon the demand of any owner or lessee, or any employee or representative of such owner or lessee, upon whose land or water such person may be hunting, trapping or fishing.

No state or county resident license to hunt, trap or fish in or on the lands or inland waters of this Commonwealth shall be deemed to be issued until the certificate printed on the reverse side of that license shall have been signed by the named licensee.

License Exceptions

All persons, except those listed below, must purchase the proper licenses before hunting or trapping.

- Resident or non-resident landowners, their spouses, their children and grandchildren and the spouses of such children and grandchildren, or the landowner's parents, resident or non-resident, do not need a license to hunt, trap or fish within the boundaries of their own lands and inland waters.
- Tenants, on the land they rent and occupy, are not required to have a license, but must have the written permission of the landowner.
- Residents, 65 years of age and over, do not need a license to hunt or trap on private property in their county of residence.
- Residents under the age of 12 are not required to obtain a license to hunt provided they are accompanied and directly supervised within sight of an adult who has a valid Virginia hunting license on their person.

- Any person who is not hunting, but is aiding a disabled person to hunt when such disabled person possesses a valid Virginia Disabled Resident Lifetime hunting license or a Virginia Resident Disabled Veteran Lifetime license is not required to have a license.
- Any Indian who “habitually” resides on an Indian reservation or a member of the Virginia recognized tribes who resides in the Commonwealth is not required to have a license; however, such Indian must have on his person an identification card or paper signed by the chief of his tribe, a valid tribal identification card, written confirmation through a central tribal registry, or certification from a tribal office.

Mandatory Hunter Education Requirements

The following persons are required to present a Hunter Education Certificate in order to purchase a hunting license:

- All persons who are 12–15 years of age.
- All persons 16 years of age or older who have never been issued a hunting license.

The following persons may be issued a hunting license without presenting a Hunter Education Certificate:

- Any person 16 years of age or older who presents a previously issued hunting license. *
- Any person 16 years of age or older who certifies that he or she has held a previously issued hunting license by signing the back of the license.
- Any person under the age of 12. **
- Any person who only hunts foxes with hounds while on horseback, but without firearms.
- * Virginia accepts and recognizes all states’ and countries’ hunting licenses and hunter education credentials for the purpose of complying with mandatory hunter education requirements. These may be in the form of an identification card or certificate.
- ** Youth (under the age of 12) must be accompanied and directly supervised within sight of a parent, legal guardian or an adult (designated by the parent or guardian) when hunting. The supervising adult must possess a valid Virginia hunting license.

Hunter Education

Hunter Education courses provide instruction in hunter safety, principles of conservation and sportsmanship. The courses are a minimum of 10 hours in length and cover many topics preparing new hunters to enjoy their experience in the outdoors. Courses are offered free of charge throughout the Commonwealth. To learn about courses available in your area, check the Department’s Web site or contact one of the Department’s regional offices. After August 1, 2004 you can call 1-866-604-1122 for a listing of Hunter Education classes near you. For information about obtaining a replacement certificate check the Agency’s Web site.

License Year

Licenses and permits are valid from July 1 through June 30. This period constitutes a “license year” as referred to in seasons and bag limits.

Replacement License

If a license is lost, a duplicate license must be obtained at the place where the license was originally purchased.

How to Obtain a License

There are now four ways to get your hunting license:

- **Online:** At the Department’s Web site: www.dgif.virginia.gov. Select the license(s) you want, pay with your VISA or MasterCard, and print your license(s) after you pay. There is an additional fee of \$2.00 to purchase online.
- **Telephone:** Licenses can also be purchased by phone through Bass Pro Shops by calling 1-800-986-2628. There is an additional fee of \$3.95 to purchase by phone.
- **In Person:** Sold by some clerks of the Circuit Court and hundreds of license agents located around the state. A \$.50 issuance fee will be added to each license.
- **By Mail:** Download and complete the proper form from the Department’s Web site and mail it to the address provided.

License Fees

Resident Hunting Licenses, Permits and Stamps

If you are required to buy a resident hunting license, one of the following is needed to hunt in Virginia. Other licenses, permits or stamps may also be required.

Resident License to hunt statewide (16 years or older) . . . 12.00

County or City Resident License to hunt in county or city of residence only (16 years or older) 5.00

Resident Junior License to hunt statewide (ages 12 to 15; optional for under 12 years old) 7.50

Resident Youth Combination License (under 16 years old) to hunt statewide; to hunt bear, deer, and turkey; to hunt with a bow and arrow during the archery seasons and to hunt with a muzzleloader during the muzzleloading deer seasons . . 15.00

Resident Junior Lifetime License (under age 12) to hunt statewide. No annual bear, deer, turkey license required until age 12. National Forest Stamp, State Forest Stamp, County Damage Stamp and Bonus Deer Permits, if applicable, are required in addition to this license). Available only through the Richmond office. 250.00

Resident Lifetime License to hunt (annual bear, deer, turkey license and all applicable licenses, stamps, or permits are required in addition to this license). Available only through the Richmond office.

Through age 44 (hunter education course required under age 16)	250.00
Age 45–50	200.00
Age 51–55	150.00
Age 56–60	100.00
Age 61–64	50.00
Age 65 and over	10.00

Service-Connected Totally and Permanently Disabled Veteran Resident Lifetime License to hunt and freshwater fish (available only through Richmond Office)5.00

Totally and Permanently Disabled Resident Special Lifetime License to hunt, available only through Richmond Office; (annual bear, deer, turkey license and all applicable licenses, stamps or permits are required in addition to this hunting license)5.00

Resident Senior Citizen (age 65 and over) Annual License to hunt (annual bear, deer, turkey license and all applicable licenses, stamps or permits are required in addition to this license)1.00

One or more of the following may be required in addition to the resident hunting license.

Resident Bear, Deer, Turkey License to hunt bear, deer and turkey statewide (age 16 years or older) required in addition to county or state hunting license, or senior citizen license or lifetime license (Not required if senior citizen's lifetime license was purchased before July 1, 1988. Not required for holders of Disabled Veterans Lifetime license.)12.00

Resident Junior Bear, Deer, Turkey License to hunt bear, deer and turkey statewide (under 16 years old) required in addition to Resident Junior Hunting License7.50

Resident Archery License to hunt statewide during the archery season12.00

Resident Muzzleloading License to hunt during the muzzleloading season12.00

Resident Bonus Deer Permit (2 antlerless tags) See page 25.12.00

Resident County Damage Stamp to hunt deer and bear in Highland and Smyth counties, in addition to other licenses, and sold only by the clerks of those counties.1.00

Nonresident Hunting Licenses, Permits and Stamps

If you are required to buy a nonresident hunting license, one of the following is needed to hunt in Virginia. Other licenses, permits, or stamps may also be required.

Nonresident License to hunt statewide (16 years or older)80.00

Nonresident 3-Day Trip License to hunt statewide. Must be 3 consecutive hunting days; no Sunday hunting; 16 years or older.40.00

Nonresident Youth License to hunt statewide (under age 12)12.00

Nonresident Youth License to hunt statewide (ages 12–15)15.00

Nonresident Youth Combination License (under 16 years old) to hunt statewide; to hunt bear, deer, and turkey; to hunt with a bow and arrow during the archery seasons and to hunt with a muzzleloader during the muzzleloading deer seasons30.00

Nonresident Lifetime License to hunt (available only through Richmond Office). Annual deer, bear, turkey license and all applicable licenses, stamps or permits are required in addition to this license; 16 years or older.500.00

One or more of the following may be required in addition to the nonresident hunting license.

Nonresident Bear, Deer, Turkey License to hunt bear, deer and turkey statewide, required in addition to hunting license or lifetime license

Age 16 years or older	60.00
Age 12–15 years old	15.00
Under 12 years old	12.00

Nonresident Archery License to hunt statewide during archery season25.00

Nonresident Muzzleloading License to hunt during the muzzleloading season25.00

Nonresident Shooting Preserve (to hunt within the boundaries of a licensed shooting preserve, in lieu of other required licenses)12.00

Nonresident Bonus Deer Permit (2 antlerless tags) See page 25.25.00

Fees continued on pg. 8

Archery/Muzzleloading License Requirements

- If hunting with a bow and arrow or crossbow (disabled persons only) for any game species which may legally be taken with such archery tackle during any archery season you must have a state or county hunting license, an archery license, and all other applicable licenses or permits.
- If hunting with a muzzleloading firearm for any game species which may legally be taken with a muzzleloading firearm during any muzzleloading deer season you must have a state or county hunting license, a muzzleloading license, and all other applicable licenses or permits.

Nonresident Damage Stamp to hunt deer and bear in Highland and Smyth counties, in addition to other licenses, and sold only by the clerks of those counties.5.00

Trapping Licenses

If you are required to buy a trapping license, one of the following is needed to trap in Virginia. Other licenses or permits may also be required.

County or City Resident to trap in county or city of residence10.00

Resident License to trap statewide35.00

Resident Senior Citizen License (age 65 and over) to trap1.00

Resident Senior Citizen Lifetime License (age 65 or over) to trap (available only through Richmond Office)10.00

Service-Connected Totally and Permanently Disabled Veteran Resident Lifetime License to trap (available only through Richmond Office)5.00

Totally and Permanently Disabled Resident Special Lifetime license to trap (available only through Richmond Office)5.00

Nonresident License to trap (available only through Richmond Office)150.00

Miscellaneous Permits and Stamps

Permits:

National Forest Permit to hunt and trap within National Forests. Not required of residents under the age of 16 to trap; residents 65 and older who possess a valid license to hunt or trap; or holders of complimentary license to hunt.3.00

State Forest Permit to hunt or trap on Appomattox-Buckingham, Cumberland, Prince Edward and Sandy Point State Forests. Sold by the Dept. of Forestry and local license agents near the Forests. See page 13.10.00

Stamps:

Federal Migratory Bird Stamp to take migratory waterfowl, required of persons 16 years of age and over in addition to hunting license and sold at U.S. Post Offices or online at www.duck-stamp.com15.00

Virginia Migratory Waterfowl Stamp Voluntary; available by contacting Ducks Unlimited at (757) 220-3144, fax at (757) 220-13825.00

Waterfowl/Migratory Game Birds

Migratory game birds (doves, ducks, brant, geese, tundra swan, coot, gallinules, rails, snipe and woodcock) may only be taken in accordance with supplementary regulations. These seasons are set in June and August and publications are available in August and September.

Definitions

Hunting and Trapping

The act of or the attempted act of taking, hunting, trapping, pursuing, chasing, shooting, snaring or netting birds or animals, and assisting any person who is doing the same, regardless of whether birds or animals are actually taken. When hunting and trapping is allowed, reference is made to such acts as being conducted by lawful means and in a lawful manner.

Game and Furbearer Species

Nonmigratory game birds (grouse, pheasant, bobwhite quail and turkey), game animals (bear, bobcat, deer, fox, rabbit, raccoon and squirrel), and furbearing animals (beaver, bobcat, fox, mink, muskrat, otter, opossum, raccoon, skunk and weasel) may only be taken in accordance with state laws and Department regulations, many of which are summarized in this digest.

Nuisance Species

The following animals: house mouse, Norway rat, black rat, coyote, groundhog, nutria, feral hog, European starling, English sparrow and pigeon (rock dove) are designated as nuisance species and may be taken at any time (except on Sunday) by use of a firearm or other weapon and on some public lands during certain time periods, see National Forest–Game Department Regulations page 12.

Other Wildlife

It is unlawful to take, possess, transport or sell all other wildlife species not classified as game, furbearer or nuisance, unless otherwise specifically permitted by law or regulation.

A hunting license is required to take any wild animal or bird (except as explained under hunting licenses and permits). Persons taking frogs or turtles must have an appropriate license whether by hunting (gigging), trapping or angling. Bullfrogs may be taken by bow and arrow and from private waters by firearms no larger than .22 caliber rimfire.

Dismal Swamp Line

Beginning at a point on Rt. 10 where it intersects the Isle of Wight County line, then along this highway to its intersection with the corporate limits of Suffolk, then through Suffolk to its intersection with Rt. 642 (White Marsh Road) and then along this highway in a southwest direction to Rt. 604 (Desert Road), and then southerly along this highway to the North Carolina state line.

West & East of Blue Ridge

The following counties and cities and towns within are considered “west of the Blue Ridge.” If not listed here, they are considered “east of the Blue Ridge.” Alleghany, Augusta, Bath, Bland, Botetourt, Buchanan, Carroll, Clarke, Craig, Dickenson, Floyd, Frederick, Giles, Grayson, Highland, Lee, Montgomery, Page, Pulaski, Roanoke, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Russell, Scott, Shenandoah, Smyth, Tazewell, Warren, Washington, Wise and Wythe.

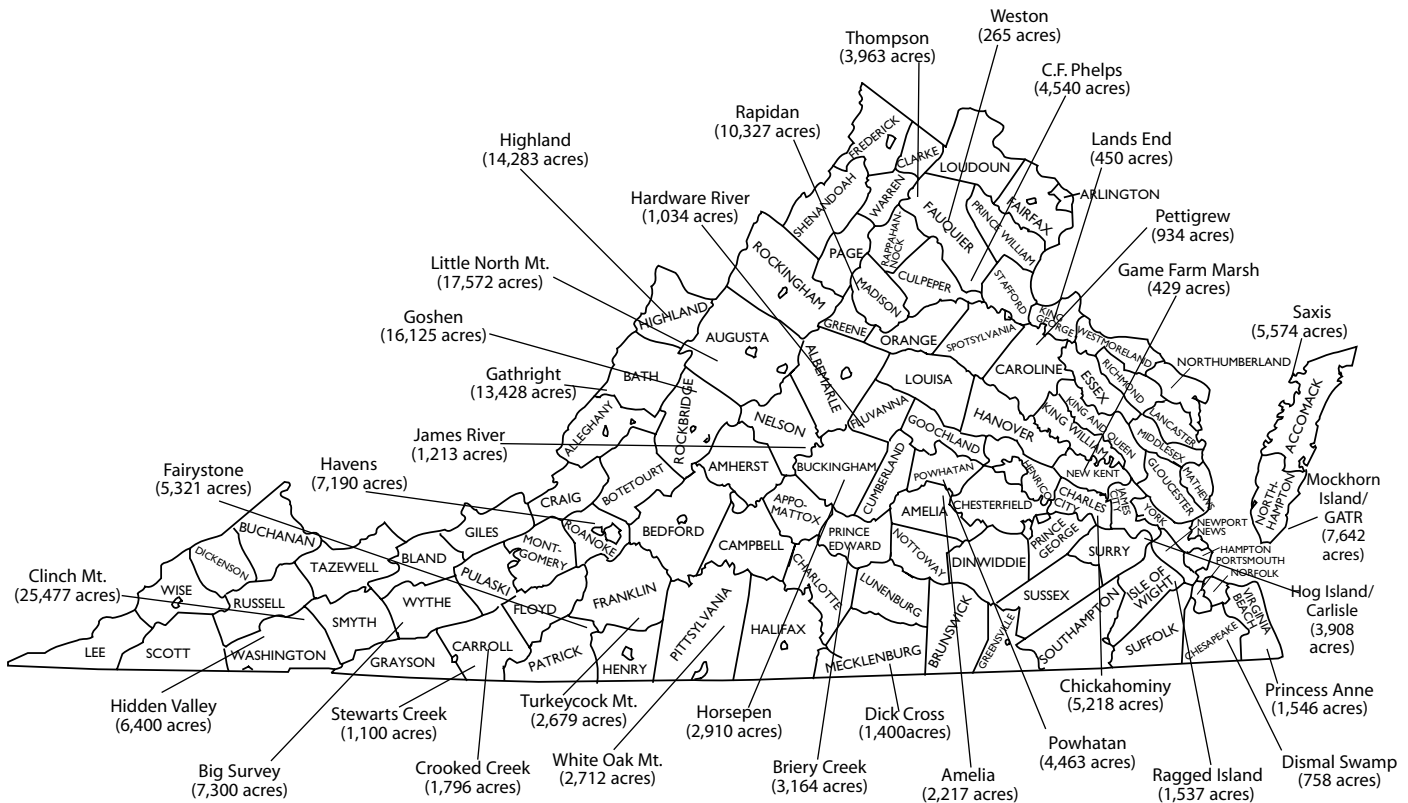
Public Hunting Lands

Department Wildlife Management Areas

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries maintains 34 management areas totaling 195,000 acres for the benefit of all citizens for a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities. Thirty-two management areas are open for some type of hunting. These lands are purchased and maintained with hunting, fishing and trapping license fees and with Wildlife Restoration Funds. We encourage the public to utilize our land and enjoy the bountiful natural resources found on each area. The map below and chart on page 10 provides a guide on the location and activities associated with each of the Department's wildlife management areas. For more detailed information on each area and an area map visit the Department's Web site.



Michelle Lehner



Recreational Opportunities on WMAs

©Dwight Dyke



	Bear	Deer	Dove Field	Grouse	Quail	Rabbit	Raccoon	Squirrel	Turkey	Waterfowl	Trapping	Trout	Warm Water Fishing	Salt Water Fishing	Developed Camping	Primitive Camping	Field Trials	Hiking	Birding/Wildlife Trail	Boat Ramp	Ranges (see page 52)
Amelia		✓	✓		Q	Q	✓	✓	✓	✓	P		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Big Survey	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓		✓					✓		✓	✓		
Briery Creek		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	P		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	
Chickahominy		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		Z	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Clinch Mt	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		Z	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Crooked Creek		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓		✓	✓		
Dick Cross		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Q	P		✓		Z	✓	✓	✓	✓	Z	
Dismal Swamp	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓			✓				Z			✓			
Fairstone Farm		✓					✓	✓	✓		✓		Z		Z	✓		✓	✓	Z	
Game Farm Marsh										✓	✓		✓		Z					Z	
Gathright	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		Z	✓		✓	✓		✓
Goshen	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	Z	
Hardware River		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	
Havens	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓		✓					✓		✓	✓		
Hidden Valley	✓						✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	
Highland	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓		✓	✓		
Hog Island		Q	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Q/M	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	Z	
Horsepen Lake		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		P		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	
James River	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	P		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	
Lands End (no hunting)																			✓		
Little North Mountain	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	Z	
Mockhorn Island		A/Q								✓	✓			✓	Z	✓		✓	✓	Z	
Pettigrew		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓		✓	✓		
Phelps	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Powhatan		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	P		✓		Z	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Princess Anne										Q/M									✓	✓	
Ragged Island		✓					✓			✓	✓			✓					✓	Z	
Rapidan	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓		✓	✓		
Saxis		✓								✓	✓			✓					✓	Z	
Stewarts Creek	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓		✓	✓		
Thompson	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓		✓	✓		
Turkeycock Mt.		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓							✓		✓			
Weston (no hunting)													✓			✓		✓	✓		
White Oak Mt.		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		P		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

A - Archery M - Managed Hunts N - Nearby P - Special Permit or Special Rules Apply Q - Quota

Rules For Wildlife Management Areas

General

- Activities involving groups of more than 12 persons require written authorization from the Department.
- Display or consumption of alcoholic beverages in public is prohibited.
- Commercial activities are prohibited except by written authorization from the Department.

Hunting & Trapping

Please refer to the current hunting and trapping seasons found in this digest. Special seasons and bag limits that apply to a wildlife management area will be posted at the entrance.

Firearms

- It is unlawful to have in possession or in a vehicle a bow or gun which is not unloaded and cased or dismantled except when it is lawful to take bear, deer, grouse, pheasants, quail, rabbit, raccoon, squirrel or turkey; and additionally, migratory game birds on Department owned lands east of the Blue Ridge; or by permit issued by the Department; or by concealed handgun permit issued by a Circuit Court.
- It is unlawful to possess or transport a loaded gun in or on any vehicle at any time on a WMA.
- Target shooting is permitted on designated ranges only.

Fishing, Boating and Swimming

Please refer to the current Virginia Freshwater Fishing Regulations digest and posted signs for any special creel and size restrictions that may apply to WMA.

- It is unlawful to use boats propelled by gasoline motors, sail or by mechanically operated recreational paddle wheel, unless otherwise posted.
- Swimming is prohibited. Anglers actively engaged in fishing, hunters actively engaged in hunting, and trappers lawfully trapping may wade in public fishing lakes.
- It is unlawful to use trotlines on public fishing lakes.

Camping/Fires

- Primitive camping is permitted for up to 14 consecutive days when occupants are engaged in authorized activities. No more than 3 camping units are permitted per site.
- Camping is prohibited on or within 100 yards of any boat ramp or fishing lake or at other specific sites as posted.
- It is unlawful to leave a campfire unattended. From February 15 to April 30 campfires are allowed only between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and midnight.

Dogs

- It is lawful to chase with dogs or train dogs on Department-owned lands only during authorized hunting, chase or training seasons that specifically permit these activities.
- Dogs must be leashed at all times outside of open hunting, chase, or training seasons.

Horseback/Bicycle Riding and Hiking

- Horseback and bicycle riding are welcome on all roads and trails unless otherwise posted. Please avoid riding in cultivated or planted fields, or on eroded areas. Riders and cyclists should be mindful of all open hunting seasons.
- Hiking is welcome. Hikers should be mindful of all open hunting seasons.
- Please avoid engaging in these activities when they may interfere with hunters, anglers, and wildlife watchers.
- Blaze orange hat or clothing is recommended for non-hunters during hunting seasons.

Vehicles

- Motor vehicles are prohibited behind barricades or gates designed to prevent entry or within areas otherwise posted to prohibit motor vehicles.
- Operation of ATVs and other unlicensed motor vehicles is prohibited.
- Cross-country motor vehicle travel (off-road travel) is prohibited.
- Motor vehicles, campers, and trailers may be parked on Department-owned lands only when the owners/responsible party are engaged in authorized activities.

Resource and Property Damage

- It is unlawful to construct or occupy any permanent structure (including a permanently-affixed tree stand) except by Department permit.
- It is unlawful to cut, mutilate, destroy or remove vegetation, or to remove minerals, artifacts or other property from the area. Metal detecting/artifact hunting is prohibited.
- It is unlawful to damage, deface, or remove any building, gate, fence, sign or other property.

Other uses are allowed only by written authorization from the Department or by posted rules.

National Forests

Parking fees are required only on the following National Forest Recreation Areas: Todd Lake, Coles Point, Longdale, Fortney Branch, Sherando Lake, Bolar Mountain, Bolar Flat, Cascades, High Knob, Bark Camp Lake, Hanging Rock, Cave Mountain Lake, Beartree, Hurricane, Grindstone, Raven Cliff, Fox Creek, Raccoon Branch, Roaring Run and Dark Horse Hollow. Seasonal day use passes are available for \$25.00. A 50% discount is available for holders of Golden Age and Golden Access Passports. For more information please call the George Washington & Jefferson National Forests' Supervisor's Office at (540) 265-5100 or contact the appropriate ranger district at:

Clinch: (276) 328-2931
Deerfield: (540) 885-8028
Dry River: (540) 432-0187
Glenwood-Pedlar: (540) 291-2189
James River: (540) 962-2214
Lee: (540) 984-4101
Mount Rogers National Recreation Area:
(276) 783-5196
New Castle: (540) 864-5195
New River Valley
Blacksburg Unit: (540) 552-4641
Wythe Unit: (276) 228-5551
Warm Springs: (540) 839-2521

Regulations Specific to National Forest and Game Department Lands

It shall be unlawful to have in possession a bow or gun which is not unloaded and cased or dismantled on all National Forest lands statewide, or on Department-owned lands and on lands managed by the Department under cooperative agreement in counties west of the Blue Ridge Mountains except during the period when it is lawful to take bear, deer, grouse, pheasant, quail, rabbit, raccoon, squirrel, turkey or waterfowl on these lands; and on Department-owned lands and on lands managed by the Department under cooperative agreement in counties east of the Blue Ridge Mountains except during the period when it is lawful to take bear, deer, grouse, pheasant, quail, rabbit, raccoon, squirrel, turkey, waterfowl or migratory game birds on these lands.

Except as provided by special concealed handgun permit, it shall be unlawful to possess or transport a loaded gun in or on any vehicle at any time on National Forest lands or Department-owned lands. "Loaded gun" is defined as a firearm in which ammunition is chambered or loaded in the magazine or clip, when such magazine or clip is found engaged or partially engaged in a firearm. The definition of a loaded muzzleloading gun will include a gun which is capped or has a charged pan.

The word "possession" shall include, but not be limited to, having any bow or firearm in or on one's person, vehicle or conveyance.

It is unlawful to chase with a dog or train dogs on National Forest lands or Department-owned lands except during author-

ized hunting, chase or training seasons that specifically permit these activities on these lands.

Access Roads

Hunter access roads on Department lands seasonally open to motor vehicles will be open (weather permitting) from the 1st Saturday in October to 2nd Saturday in February and 1st Saturday in April to 3rd Saturday in May.

Opening and closing dates of hunter access roads on National Forest Lands may vary by ranger district. Opening and closing dates are determined by management considerations for the areas accessed by these roads. Contact the local ranger district listed at left for opening and closing dates on specific roads.

Any motor driven vehicle using roads normally open to motor vehicles on Department and National Forest lands shall conform with all state laws for highway travel. No cross country travel is permitted. All terrain vehicle (ATV) and off-road vehicle (ORV) travel is permitted only on designated National Forest roads and trails.

Foot travel is invited on roads closed to motor vehicles.

Camping Policy

Primitive camping is permitted on Department-owned lands, except as otherwise posted. Camping is prohibited on or within 100 yards of any Department-owned or controlled boat ramp or fishing lake. Camping on Department-owned lands is not to exceed 14 consecutive days. Only 3 camping units permitted per site.

On the George Washington/Jefferson National Forests camping for more than 21 consecutive days without having terminated Forest occupancy for a minimum of 10 days within a 31-day time period is prohibited.

Structures

It is unlawful to construct, maintain or occupy any permanent structure, except by permit, on Department-owned lands and National Forest lands.

It is unlawful to maintain any temporary dwelling on Department-owned land for more than 14 consecutive days. Persons constructing or occupying such structures are responsible for complete removal of temporary structures.

Tree Stands

It is unlawful to construct, maintain or occupy any permanent tree stand on Department-owned lands, National Forest lands and on Department of Conservation and Recreation-owned or controlled lands. Portable tree stands, which are not permanently affixed, may be used. **Use of a safety harness while hunting from tree stands is strongly recommended.**

Unauthorized Feeding

It is unlawful to place or direct the placement of, deposit, distribute, or scatter food or salt capable of attracting or being eaten by bear, deer, or turkey on National Forest lands and Department-owned lands. This regulation does not prohibit the proper disposal of food in trash receptacles provided by the National Forest or by the Department.

Shooting Preserves

Pen-raised game birds may be taken on licensed shooting preserves from September 1 through April 30. A list of operated shooting preserves open to the public may be obtained from the Permits Section at the Department's Richmond office (804-367-1000). A state resident hunting pen-raised game birds on a licensed shooting preserve is required to have either a state or county resident hunting license. A nonresident is required to have either a state nonresident license (\$80.00) or a special nonresident shooting preserve license (\$12.00) which is valid only within the boundaries of licensed shooting preserves.

Mason Neck/Occoquan: (703) 490-4979
Presquile: (804) 333-1470
Rappahannock River Valley: (804) 333-1470

State Forests

Hunting is allowed on Appomattox-Buckingham and Prince Edward State Forests (contact 434-983-2175), Cumberland State Forest (contact 804-492-4121) and on Sandy Point State Forest (contact 804-492-4121). A State Forest Hunting Permit is required and may be purchased from local license agents or the Department of Forestry. No motorized vehicles on gated roads and trails (opened or closed) are permitted without written authorization.

State Parks

Hunting is allowed in designated areas of Pocahontas, Occaneechee, Fairystone, Grayson Highlands and Hungry Mother State Parks. Controlled hunts are held at Caledon Natural Area, Chippokes, False Cape, James River, Kiptopeake, Mason Neck, Smith Mountain Lake and York River State Parks. Contact the parks for more information. Loaded weapons are not allowed in state parks outside designated areas.

Caledon: (540) 663-3861
Chippokes: (757) 294-3625
Fairystone: (276) 930-2424
False Cape: (757) 426-7128
Grayson Highlands: (276) 579-7092
Hungry Mother: (276) 781-7400
James River: (434) 933-4355
Kiptopeake: (757) 331-2267
Mason Neck: (703) 339-2385
Occaneechee: (434) 374-2210
Pocahontas: (804) 796-4255
Smith Mountain Lake: (540) 297-6066
York River: (757) 566-3036
For Controlled Hunt Reservations: 800-933-7275

Federal Refuges

Hunting is allowed on the following National Wildlife Refuges in Virginia. For more information, contact the appropriate refuge manager at:

Back Bay: (757) 721-2412
Chincoteague: (757) 336-6122
Dismal Swamp: (757) 986-3705
Eastern Shore: (757) 331-2760
James River: (804) 333-1470

Military Areas

Fort A.P. Hill

Deer: **November 13–December 31**. One deer per day. Either sex deer hunting on **November 20, 26, 27, December 4, 11, 18, 23**. Closed Christmas and New Year's Day. Open half day on Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

Archery Season: **October 2–November 12**.

Muzzleloading Season: **October 30 - November 12**.

General Firearms: **November 13–December 31**.

All persons 12 years of age and older must present a hunter education certificate in order to purchase an A.P. Hill hunting permit.

Contact Fort A.P. Hill Game Check Station at (804) 633-8244 for details about the hunter education requirement, seasons, restrictions and bag limits for all other game species.

Fort Pickett

Deer: **November 13–January 1**. Two per day, four per year, either-sex deer hunting on **November 20, 27, December 31 and January 1**.

Quail hunting permitted on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays only.

Contact the Ft. Pickett Game Check Station at (434) 292-2618 for further details about seasons and special restrictions.

Quantico Marine Reservation

Deer: **November 13–December 31**. Closed Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day. Open half day on Thanksgiving Day.

Archery Season: **October 2–November 12**.

No Muzzleloading Season.

Consult Quantico Game Check Station for daily and seasonal bag limits, other seasons and further details, at (703) 784-5523 or www.quantico.usmc.mil/g5/nrea/fwa/hunting.htm.

Fort Belvoir

Archery Only: qualification required.

Deer: **September 18, 2004–March 26, 2005**.

Spring Gobbler: **April 9–May 14, 2005**.

Contact Outdoor Recreation staff at (703) 805-3688 for further details.

National Parks

Hunting is prohibited in all National Parks in Virginia. Hunters may obtain hunter parking access permits from the Blue Ridge Parkway National Park Service to park at designated areas along the Blue Ridge Parkway and cross national park lands (weapons must be unloaded and cased) to hunt on National Forest lands. For further information call (540) 377-2377.

General Hunting Regulations

Blaze Orange Requirements

- When hunting any game species during the firearms deer season, every hunter or person accompanying a hunter shall wear a blaze orange hat or blaze orange upper body clothing that is visible from 360 degrees or display at least 100 square inches of solid blaze orange material at shoulder level within body reach and visible from 360 degrees. Hats may have a bill or brim color or design other than solid blaze orange. Hats shall not be in "camo" style, since the latter is designated to prevent visibility. A logo, which does not detract from visibility, may be worn on a blaze orange hat.
- Blaze orange is not required during the muzzleloading deer season(s) or by waterfowl hunters, individuals participating in hunting dog field trials and fox hunters on horseback without firearms.

Hunting Hours

(See page 56 for sunrise-sunset timetable.)

- One-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset for nonmigratory birds and game animals except during spring gobbler season.
- One-half hour before sunrise until 12 noon, during spring gobbler season except the last 12 days the hunting hours are from one-half hour before sunrise until sunset.
- Bobcat, foxes, raccoons, and opossums may be hunted by day or night during authorized seasons.
- Migratory game birds, waterfowl, and special resident goose (see special pamphlets for hunting these species).
- Nuisance species may be taken day or night.

Hunting With Dogs:

- Dogs may be used to pursue wild birds and animals during hunting seasons where not prohibited.
- When the chase begins on other lands, fox hunters and coon hunters may follow their dogs on prohibited lands, and hunters of all other game, when the chase begins on other lands, may go upon prohibited lands to retrieve their dogs, but may not carry firearms or bows and arrows on their persons or hunt any game while thereon. The use of vehicles to retrieve dogs on prohibited lands shall be allowed only with the permission of the landowner or his agent.



illustration by Luther Trower

Training Dogs

The training of dogs on live wild animals is considered hunting and is unlawful during the closed season.

- You must have a valid hunting license while training dogs on live wild animals.
- You may train dogs during daylight hours on rabbits and non-migratory game birds on private lands and Quantico Marine Reservation. Participants shall have no weapons other than starter pistols in their possession and no wild animals shall be taken. Weapons may be in possession when training dogs on captive raised and properly marked mallards and pigeons so that they may be immediately shot or recovered, except on Sunday.
- You may train dogs during daylight hours on rabbits and non-migratory game birds on Ft. A.P. Hill from September 1–February 28. Participants may only have starter pistols in their possession. No captive reared birds may be released.
- You may train dogs on National Forest or Department-owned lands only during authorized training seasons that specifically permit these activities.
- You may train dogs on quail on designated portions of the Amelia Wildlife Management Area (WMA), Chester F. Phelps WMA, Chickahominy WMA (Closed for the 2004–2005 season. See Department Web site.) and Dick Cross WMA from September 1 to the day prior to the opening date of the quail hunting season, both dates inclusive. No weapons other than starter pistols may be in possession and pen-raised birds may not be released.
- You may train dogs during daylight hours on rabbits and non-migratory game birds on the Weston WMA from September 1 thru March 31, both dates inclusive. Participants in this dog training season shall have no weapons other than starter pistols in their possession, shall not release pen-raised birds, and must comply with all regulations and laws pertaining to hunting. No game shall be taken.

Legal Use of Firearms and Archery Equipment

- Shotguns not larger than 10 gauge.
- Shotgun magazines must be plugged with a plug that cannot be removed from the loading end so the gun will hold a total of no more than three shells.
- Shotgun barrels must be at least 18 inches long.
- Shotguns with rifled barrels are permitted in areas where slugs may be used (see Local Firearms Ordinances pg. 17).
- No restrictions on shot size except for spring gobbler season when it is unlawful to have any shot in possession larger than number 2 fine shot while hunting.
- Rifles used for deer or bear must be .23 caliber or larger.

- Rifles may be used for taking wild animals and birds, except migratory game birds and waterfowl, and where prohibited by local ordinances (see Local Firearms Ordinances pg. 17).
- Rifles, pistols, and revolvers may be used for hunting crows, except where prohibited by local ordinances (see Local Firearms Ordinances pg. 17).
- Pistols and revolvers firing .22 caliber rimfire ammunition and muzzleloading pistols may be used for small game where .22 rifles are permitted (see Local Firearms Ordinances pg. 17).
- Muzzleloading shotguns, muzzleloading rifles or archery tackle may be used to hunt during the firearms seasons where not prohibited (see Local Firearms Ordinances pg. 17 and Archery/Muzzleloading License Requirements pg. 7).
- All game birds and animals, except deer, may be hunted with shotguns from boats. Hunters must have permission from the landowner to hunt/retrieve game located on private land.
- Pistols and revolvers are lawful for deer and bear hunting only in those counties where hunting deer and bear with rifles is lawful. Cartridges used must be .23 caliber or larger and have a manufacturer's rating of 350 foot-pounds muzzle energy or more.
- **Concealed handguns may be in the possession of hunters during the archery and muzzleloading seasons when they also possess a valid concealed handgun permit. Such handguns may not be used to shoot wild animals during these seasons.**
- Archery tackle (includes longbow, recurve, and compound bows) may be used for hunting wild birds and animals. (See Archery/Muzzleloading License Requirements pg. 7).
- Crossbows may be used statewide by disabled persons who meet criteria established by the Department and attested to by a licensed physician on a standardized form provided by the Department (see Department's Web site). The form must be in the individual's possession while hunting. Disabled hunters possessing this form are allowed to participate in hunting seasons under the same rules, regulations, laws and conditions that apply to hunters using standard archery equipment. A crossbow is defined as any bow that can be mechanically held in the drawn or cocked position.

Unlawful Methods

Penalties may include hunting license revocation for one year to life and forfeiture of firearms.

A person found guilty of a violation a second time within three years of a previous conviction shall have their license revoked by the court trying the case.

It is unlawful to:

- Hunt wild birds and wild animals with firearms or other weapons on Sunday, except on licensed shooting preserves. Raccoon hunters may hunt until 2:00 a.m. Sunday mornings.

Shooting From the Road is Illegal

Shooting at wildlife from a vehicle and/or from or across a public road is illegal. Penalties include: fines, license revocation and confiscation of firearms.

- Discharge a firearm, crossbow, or bow and arrow in or across or within the right-of-way of any road.
- Cast a light attached to a vehicle or from a vehicle beyond a roadway upon places used by deer without written permission of the landowner or at anytime while in the possession of a rifle, shotgun, pistol, crossbow, bow and arrow, or spear-gun.
- Handle any firearm in a reckless manner so as to endanger the life, limb, or property of any person.
- Destroy, mutilate, or take down "posted" signs or to litter.
- Hunt adjacent to forest fires.
- Willfully and intentionally impede the lawful hunting or trapping of wild birds or wild animals.
- Kill or cripple and knowingly allow any non-migratory game bird or game animal to be wasted without making a reasonable effort to retrieve the animal and retain it in possession.
- Hunt (under age 12) without being accompanied and directly supervised by a licensed parent, guardian, or other adult designated by the parent or guardian. The term "directly supervised" means the youth hunter must be within sight of the person supervising.
- Shoot a rifle or pistol at wild birds or animals on or over the public inland waters of the state.
- Carry a loaded rifle or pistol on a boat or other floating device on public inland waters for hunting wild birds or animals.
- Shoot waterfowl or migratory game birds from a boat being propelled by a motor.
- Hunt or trap on another's land without the landowner's permission. (See Hunting on Private Property pg. 16)
- Hunt while under the influence of intoxicants or narcotic drugs.
- Molest eggs, nest, den or young of any wild bird or animal, except nuisance species, at any time without a permit as required by law.
- Occupy any baited blind or other baited place for the purpose of taking or attempting to take any wild game bird or wild game animal or to put out bait or salt for the purpose of taking or killing any wild game bird or wild game animal, except for the purpose of trapping furbearing animals.
- Chase with dogs or hunt with dogs or to attempt to chase or hunt with dogs any wild animal from a baited site or to train

dogs on any wild animal from a baited site. Furthermore, it shall be unlawful to place, distribute or maintain bait or salt for any wild animal for the purpose of chasing with dogs, hunting with dogs or the training of dogs. Bait shall mean any food, grain, or other consumable substance that could serve as a lure or attractant; however, crops grown for normal or accepted agriculture or wildlife management purposes shall not be considered as bait. A baited site will be considered to be baited for 30 days following the complete removal of all such bait or salt.

- Shoot or attempt to take any wild bird or animal from any vehicle, except as otherwise provided by law.
- Exceed the bag limit or possess over the daily limit of any wild bird or animal while in the forests, fields, or waters of this state.
- Hunt or attempt to kill or trap any species of wild bird or wild animal after having obtained the daily bag or season limit during such day or season. However, any properly licensed person, or a person exempt from having to obtain a license, who has obtained such daily bag or season limit while hunting may assist others who are hunting game by calling game, retrieving game, handling dogs or conducting drives if the weapon in his possession is an unloaded firearm, a bow without a nocked arrow or an unloaded crossbow. Any properly licensed person, or person exempt from having to obtain a license, who has obtained such season limit prior to commencement of the hunt may assist others who are hunting game by calling game, retrieving game, handling dogs, or conducting drives, provided he does not have a firearm, bow or crossbow in his possession.
- Use live birds or animals to decoy or call game.
- Kill or attempt to kill any deer while in a boat or other type of watercraft.
- Hold in captivity any live wild birds or wild animals outside the limits allowed by regulations without a permit.
- Alter, change, borrow or lend a hunting license or permit.
- Use vehicles or possess firearms while retrieving dogs on private lands without permission of the landowner.
- Hunt with arrows to which any drug, chemical or toxic substance has been added or explosive-head arrows.
- Possess or transport any wild bird or wild animal or the carcass or the parts thereof, unless specifically allowed and only in accordance with regulations.
- Use a crossbow, except by persons with certain permanent disabilities (see General Hunting Regulations pg. 15).
- Hunt wild birds and wild animals with fully automatic firearms, (i.e. machine guns).
- Sell or purchase any wild bird or wild animal carcass or parts thereof, except as specifically permitted by law.
- Virginia law specifies that it shall be unlawful for any person who has been convicted of a felony to knowingly and intentionally possess or transport any firearm. A muzzleloading

firearm is considered a firearm under Virginia law. Any person prohibited from possessing, transporting, or carrying a firearm under this law may petition the circuit court of the jurisdiction in which he resides for a permit to possess or carry a firearm.

- Intentionally cripple or otherwise harm any game animal for the intent of continuing a hunt, or chase, or for the purpose of training dogs. Upon treeing, baying, or otherwise containing an animal in a manner that offers the animal no avenue of escape, the person or the hunting party shall either 1) harvest the animal if within a legal take season and by using lawful methods of take or 2) terminate the chase by retrieving the dogs and allowing the animal freedom to escape for the remainder of the same calendar day.
- Dislodge an animal from a tree for the intent of continuing a hunt, or chase, or for the purpose of training dogs.
- Use radio tracking equipment, except on dogs or on raptors permitted by a falconry permit, to aid in the chase, harvest or capture of wildlife.

Hunting on Private Property

- It is unlawful to hunt on private property without the permission of the landowner.
- Hunters must have permission of the landowner to track or retrieve wounded game on private property.

Posted Property:

It is unlawful to hunt on posted property without written permission of the landowner and is punishable by a fine of up to \$2500 and/or 12 months in jail.

Landowners may post their property by any of the following methods:

- Using a paint mark of aluminum color paint consisting of a vertical line at least two inches in width and at least eight inches in length, no less than three feet and not more than six feet from the ground or normal water surface and visible when approaching the property.
- Signs which specifically prohibit hunting, fishing or trespassing on the property.

Property not posted:

It is unlawful to hunt any unposted property without permission of the landowner and is punishable by a fine of up to \$500.

All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Regulations

No ATV shall be operated:

- On any public highway, or other public property, except as authorized by proper authorities or to the extent necessary to cross a public highway by the most direct route.
- By any person under the age of 16, except that children between the ages of 12 and 16 may operate ATVs powered by engines of no less than 70 nor more than 90 cubic centimeters displacement.
- By any person unless he is wearing a protective helmet of a type approved by the Superintendent of State Police for use by motorcycle operators.
- On another person's property without the written consent of the owner of the property or as explicitly authorized by law.
- With a passenger at any time, unless vehicle is designed and equipped to be operated with more than one rider.
- The above does not apply to members of the household or employees of the owner or lessee of private property on which the ATV is operated.

Local Firearms Ordinances, Laws and Regulations

The following counties and cities have regulations concerning the use and transportation of firearms. The number or numbers following that county name indicate the regulations listed below for that particular county. In addition, **certain counties have ordinances other than those listed**, primarily pertaining to possession of firearms near parks or schools, hunting or discharging firearms near populated areas or buildings and age limitations for possession of loaded firearms on public roads. If a locality is not listed, state firearms restrictions apply (see Legal Use of Firearms and Archery Equipment on page 14).

Accomack 43	Floyd 18	Lunenburg 17	Richmond 6, 7, 66, 67
Albemarle 16, 54	Franklin 26	Madison 22, 25, 54	Richmond (city) 54
Amelia 15	Gloucester 14	Mecklenburg 27	Roanoke 25, 54
Amherst 18	Goochland 2, 9, 17, 23	Middlesex 26	Rockbridge 54
Arlington 59	Greensville 15, 21, 22	Nelson 22	Southampton 3, 8, 19, 41, 42
Buckingham 2, 12	Halifax 2, 7, 33, 38, 48, 61	New Kent 8, 12, 25, 54	Stafford 18, 54
Caroline 6, 17	Hampton (city) 31, 45	Newport News 1	Suffolk 18, 44
Campbell 11	Hanover 7, 46, 53	Northampton 7, 53	Surry 7, 53, 54
Charles City 17, 24	Isle of Wight 8, 12, 35	Northumberland 9, 17, 26, 42, 54	Sussex 7, 48, 73
Chesapeake 29, 30, 46	James City 40, 54	Orange 18, 22, 34	Virginia Beach 2, 7, 18, 54, 56, 57, 58
Chesterfield 7, 14, 22, 37, 54, 70	King George 6, 17, 22, 26, 54	Petersburg 54	Warren 54
Clarke 25, 54	King and Queen 39, 42	Pittsylvania 26	Westmoreland 9, 24, 50
Culpeper 18, 22, 54	King William 10, 17, 18, 28	Poquoson (city) 68, 69, 71, 72	Williamsburg 1, 54
Cumberland 17, 27, 42, 60	Lancaster 6, 12, 26	Prince George 7, 9, 32, 42	York 46, 47
Danville 54	Loudoun 22, 54, 62, 63, 64, 65	Prince William 2, 9, 12, 18	
Dinwiddie 12, 13, 42	Louisa 4, 9, 17, 27	Rappahannock 18	
Essex 7, 42, 49			
Fairfax 2, 25, 45			
Fauquier 14, 18, 22, 36, 37, 54			

1. No discharge of firearms except on approved ranges.
2. No rifles larger than .22 for hunting.
3. Unlawful to hunt with a muzzleloading shotgun loaded with slugs or sabot slugs.
4. No rifles larger than .22 for hunting except groundhogs.
6. No rifles larger than .22 for hunting except groundhogs outside of the regular hunting season.

7. No rifles for deer hunting.
8. No rifles for big game hunting.
9. No hunting with shotguns loaded with slugs.
10. No hunting of big game with shotguns loaded with slugs.
11. It shall be unlawful to hunt with a firearm within the right-of-way of any primary or secondary highway.
12. It is lawful to use muzzleloading rifles for game animals in the regular hunting season.
13. It is lawful to hunt deer with muzzleloading rifles only from stands elevated 10 feet.
14. It is unlawful to hunt from the road with firearms.
15. It is unlawful to hunt with firearms from the road and within 10 feet of the ditch bank.
16. It is unlawful to hunt within 50 feet of the road.
17. Muzzleloading rifles are permitted during any authorized deer season where firearms are permitted.
18. It is unlawful to hunt with a firearm within 100 yds. of a road.
19. It is unlawful to transport, possess or carry a loaded rifle in any vehicle while on the road from October 1 through February 15.
21. It is unlawful to transport or possess a loaded shotgun or loaded rifle on the road from October 1 through Feb. 15.
22. It is unlawful to possess a loaded firearm on the road except when permission to hunt is obtained from landowners on each side.
23. It is unlawful to transport or possess loaded shotgun or loaded rifle on the road from sundown to sunrise.
24. No rifles over 22 caliber for hunting except for groundhogs between March 1 and August 31.
25. No hunting with firearms of game species from within 100 yds. of a road.
26. No hunting with firearms of any game animal from the road right of way.
27. No hunting with firearms from the road including ditch to ditch.
28. No hunting with a rifle larger than .22 or shotgun slugs during the deer season.
29. When 100 yds. from a road and elevated from a stand 15 ft. above ground a rifle may be used to hunt big game east of the Dismal Swamp line.
30. It is unlawful to carry a loaded firearm on the road or on the right-of-way.
31. All hunting within the City of Hampton is prohibited, with the exception of shotgun hunting from a licensed blind. No shot larger than 00 buckshot may be used, and no shot shall be discharged landward within 500 feet of the shoreline.
32. It is lawful to hunt deer with muzzleloading rifles only from stands elevated at least 10 feet above the ground; however,

this requirement shall be expressly inapplicable to all legally handicapped persons.

33. The use of a muzzleloading rifle shall be permitted during the special early muzzleloading season and from the opening day of the state's prescribed regular firearm season for deer hunting through and including the second Saturday of the said season.
34. It is unlawful to transport or possess a loaded shotgun or rifle in a vehicle on a road during open deer season.
35. It shall be unlawful to possess outside of a vehicle, or shoot or hunt with a rifle, muzzleloader, pistol, or shotgun loaded with slugs, or to possess shotgun slugs on Ragged Island Wildlife Management Area in Isle of Wight County. In addition, it shall be unlawful to discharge any firearm within 100 yards of the boardwalk or nature trail on Ragged Island Wildlife Management Area.
36. It is unlawful to discharge a firearm from or across any sidewalk, highway or on public land.
37. It is unlawful for minors to carry firearms on public highways or public lands unless accompanied by certain adults.
38. It shall be unlawful to use any ammunition larger than .22 rimfire while hunting, except rifles up to .25 may be used to hunt groundhogs from March 1 to September 1 with written permission from the landowner.
39. It shall be lawful to use muzzleloading rifles for deer and squirrels during the regular seasons.
40. It shall be unlawful to discharge a rifle larger than .22 caliber, a muzzleloader larger than .36 caliber, or a shotgun loaded with slugs except from stands elevated at least 10 feet above the ground, except for groundhogs in certain areas between March 1 and September 1.
41. It shall be unlawful to hunt with a muzzleloading rifle at any time.
42. It shall be unlawful to use a rifle of a caliber larger than .22 rimfire except that groundhogs may be hunted with a rifle of a caliber larger than .22 rimfire between March 1 and August 31.
43. It shall be unlawful to hunt with a firearm on or within 50 feet of the center of any primary and secondary highway.
44. **East of the Dismal Swamp line** (see page 8 for definition of line) Rifles, including muzzleloading rifles, are permitted for big game hunting when used from stands elevated 15 feet above the ground (except legally handicapped hunters are exempt from tree stand requirements); no special early or late muzzleloader seasons in effect.
West of the Dismal Swamp line (see page 8 for definition of line) No rifles for big game hunting. However, when hunting from a stand 10 feet above the ground (except legally handicapped hunters are exempt from tree stand requirements) muzzleloading rifles are lawful for game species during all open seasons, including special muzzleloading deer seasons.
45. All rifles, pistols, or shotguns loaded with slugs prohibited for any hunting.

46. Discharging firearms or air-operated or gas-operated weapons prohibited within certain areas: check local county/city ordinances.
47. No discharge of rifles larger than .22 except on approved ranges.
48. Muzzleloading rifles permitted during the special muzzleloading season.
49. Muzzleloading rifles are permitted during any authorized firearms season for the hunting of game animals except for the hunting of turkeys during the spring gobbler season.
50. Shotguns loaded with slugs and muzzleloading rifles may be used for big game hunting.
51. It shall be unlawful to use a rifle larger than .22 rimfire except that groundhogs may be hunted with a rifle of larger caliber.
52. It is lawful to hunt deer with muzzleloading rifles during the special muzzleloading season.
53. It is lawful to hunt deer with muzzleloading rifles.
54. It is unlawful to transport, possess, or carry a loaded rifle or shotgun in any vehicle on any public street, road or highway.
56. No discharge of firearms across or within 150 yards of any building, dwelling, street, sidewalk, alley, roadway, public land, or public place.
57. No discharge of firearms north or west of a line from the Chesapeake-Virginia Beach boundary, thence northwardly along North Landing Road; thence eastwardly along Indian River Road; thence northeastwardly along New Bridge Road, thence eastwardly along Sandbridge Road to the Atlantic Ocean, or across any land north of False Cape Park and east of Shipp's Bay and Point Creek. No discharge of rifles larger than .22 south of this line except muzzleloading rifles may be used to hunt deer during the firearms deer season.
58. Shotguns firing pellets lawful on certain agricultural lands of fifty contiguous acres or more, and on certain lands south of a line from the Chesapeake-Virginia Beach boundary, thence northeastwardly along Elbow Road; thence southeastwardly along Salem Road; thence northeastwardly along North Landstown Road; thence southeastwardly along Princess Anne Road; thence eastwardly along Sandbridge Road to the Atlantic Ocean. The property must be permitted by the City Manager for this purpose.
59. It shall be unlawful for any person to discharge or shoot off a firearm in the county. It shall be unlawful for any person to discharge or shoot or throw any dangerous missiles by mechanical, explosive, air- or gas-propelled means, or similar method or device onto or across any public sidewalk, path, or roadway, at any public structure or building, or at or onto the property of another. It is unlawful for any person to shoot a compound bow, crossbow, longbow, or recurve bow at or upon the property of another without permission. It shall be unlawful to discharge a projectile from any of the aforementioned bows within 100 yards of any public road, public building or structure, private residence or structure, or property of another. Nothing in this ordinance shall be construed to prohibit the use of firearms or other instruments or missiles or compound bows, crossbows, longbows, or recurve bows in lawful self defense or in the lawful defense of property, or to prohibit the use of firearms or other missiles or compound bows, crossbows, longbows, or recurve bows in supervised sport, recreation, or training conducted on safety-inspected and approved ranges and courses, provided the same is not contrary to existing law.
60. It is lawful to hunt deer with rifles from stands elevated 10 feet above the ground during the regular hunting season.
61. It is unlawful to hunt or attempt to hunt on a primary or secondary state maintained highway, and within the side ditches of such highways.
62. Discharging firearms is prohibited within certain areas (check local county ordinance for area description), except deer hunting is permitted with handguns, shotguns, or muzzleloading rifles using a single projectile and all other hunting is allowed with rifles of .22 caliber rimfire or less, handguns, shotguns, and muzzleloading rifles using single or multiple projectiles.
63. The discharge of firearms is prohibited within 50 yards of a highway in the primary or secondary system of state roads.
64. Discharge of firearms is prohibited within 100 yards of any public park or school.
65. Discharge of firearms is prohibited within 100 yards of a building with a current occupancy permit unless the owner or authorized agent has given permission.
66. Muzzleloaders shall be legal firearms during any firearms season.
67. Shotgun slugs shall be permitted for deer hunting.
68. It shall be unlawful for any person to transport, possess or carry a loaded shotgun, rifle, pistol, or firearm of any nature in any vehicle or on his person over, along or on any public street, road or highway in the city.
69. It shall be unlawful for any person to discharge an air gun, spring gun or firearm from, along, across or toward, or within 300 yards of any paved public street, highway or road or any building in the city.
70. It shall be lawful to hunt game species with a muzzleloading rifle during the prescribed open seasons.
71. The discharge or use of a rifle, except for a .22 caliber rim fire is prohibited within the city limits.
72. The use of muzzleloading rifles during the prescribed open seasons for the hunting of game species is permitted in the city; provided, however, that the use of such muzzleloading rifle shall be only from a stand located at least 10 feet above the ground.
73. No rifles for turkey hunting.

Bear, Deer and Turkey Tag Validation and Checking Requirements

Validation of Bear, Deer and Turkey Tags

- All hunters harvesting a bear, deer, or turkey, unless the hunter is license exempt, are required to validate an appropriate tag on their bear-deer-turkey license (big game license), bonus deer permit, or special permit (DCAP, DMAP) at the place of kill prior to moving the animal in any way. To validate a tag, successful hunters must completely remove the designated notch area from the appropriate license or permit tag. (See below)
- DO NOT detach license or permit tags to attach to the animal. Validation only requires the removal of the designated notch area from the appropriate license or permit tag.
- It shall be unlawful for any person to validate (notch) a bear, deer, or turkey tag from any license or special permit prior to the killing of an animal. A tag that is mistakenly validated (notched) prior to the killing of an animal must be immediately voided by the licensee or permittee by writing, in ink, the word "VOID" on the line provided on the tag.
- Hunters harvesting an elk are required to validate an appropriate deer tag.

How to Validate a Tag and Check Bear, Deer and Turkey

The diagram illustrates the process of validating a tag and checking a bear, deer, or turkey. On the left, a sample tag is shown with a notch. The tag is divided into sections for different types of animals: DEER EITHER SEX, DEER EITHER SEX, DEER ANTERLESS ONLY, and DEER ANTERLESS ONLY. Each section has a 'DO NOT REMOVE' label and a 'Check Card or Confirmation Number' line. The number 'L1234567890' is written on the first 'Check Card or Confirmation Number' line. An orange arrow points to the notch on the tag, indicating where to remove the designated notch area. To the right of the tag, a list of four steps is provided:

1. Remove the designated notch area from the appropriate tag on your big game license prior to moving the animal. **Do not remove the tag from your license.**
2. Check your deer or spring turkey by calling **1-866-468-4263** or take it to a check station. **Bears and fall turkeys must be checked at an official check station.**
3. Write the check card number or the telephone confirmation number on the license tag next to the notch.
4. You're done.

Checking Bear, Deer and Turkey

- Bear, deer and turkey must be checked by all successful hunters, including license exempt hunters, upon vehicle transport of the carcass or at the conclusion of legal hunting hours, whichever occurs first and without unnecessary delay.
- All deer and spring turkeys must be checked at either a check station or by using the telephone checking system.
- All fall turkeys must be checked at a check station. Fall turkeys cannot be checked through the telephone checking system.
- All bears must be checked at an official bear check station. Bears cannot be checked through the telephone checking system.
- It is unlawful to destroy the identity (sex) of any bear, deer, or turkey until it is checked. After an appropriate tag has been validated (notched), successful bear, deer and elk hunters are allowed to dismember the carcass to pack it out from the place of kill as long as they do not destroy the identity of the sex and all the parts of the carcass are present when the animal is checked.
- Deer hunters who plan to enter a deer head in the Eastern or Western Regional Big Game Contests or the Virginia Outdoor Sportsman Show will need to check their antlered buck at a check station. These contests will require an official big game check card for all entries.
- Spring turkey hunters who plan to enter a turkey in any big game or trophy contest that requires a certified weight of the turkey will need to check their turkey at a check station. These contests require a check card for all entries.
- Unless otherwise specified, checking requirements for deer also apply to elk.
- Elk must be checked at a check station. Elk cannot be checked through the telephone checking system.

Check Stations for Bear, Deer and Turkey

- Hunters checking bear, deer, elk and turkeys at a check station will be given a check card furnished by the Department. The successful hunter shall then immediately write the check card number, in ink, on the line labeled “check card or confirmation number” of the tag that was validated (notched) at the place of kill.
- Black bears must be checked at an official bear check station. One or more bear check stations have been established in 69 counties or cities (see page 24). The location of these bear check stations can be obtained from any check station, game warden, or Game Department office. In counties without established bear check stations, successful hunters may transport their kill to a bear check station in an adjoining county that has an established bear check station and also may have their bear checked by a game warden or by Wildlife Division staff. Department staff may be contacted by calling the VDGIF radio dispatcher (Richmond, 804-367-1258) or nearest regional office listed on page 3. Bear check station locations are also listed on the Department Web site at www.dgif.virginia.gov. The successful bear hunter shall surrender, or allow to be removed, one premolar tooth from the carcass. Also the check station operator shall permanently affix a seal, furnished by the Department, to the carcass.
- Hunters having difficulty locating an open check station may contact the Department at (804) 367-1258 or their nearest Department regional office listed on page 3 of this digest during normal business hours. Check station locations are also listed on the Department Web site at www.dgif.virginia.gov.
- The check card must be kept in possession with the carcass until the carcass is processed.
- If the carcass of an animal checked at a check station is left unattended, the check card must be securely attached to the carcass.

Telephone Checking System for Deer and Spring Turkey

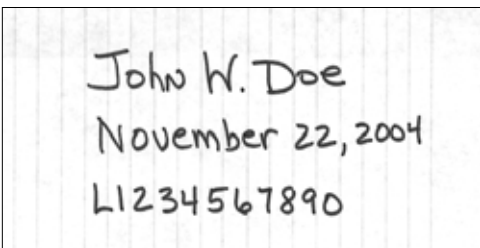
1-866-GOT-GAME

- Only deer (except elk) and spring turkeys may be checked using the telephone checking system.
- Successful hunters can check their kill by calling a toll-free number **1-866-GOT-GAME (468-4263)**. Only touch-tone phones may be used (rotary phones will not work).
- Before calling the system, you will need your big game license, a pen and a piece of paper to record your confirmation number. If you are exempt from purchasing a big game license, you will need your driver’s license number or your social security number.
- Follow the instructions and provide the requested information using the buttons on a touch-tone phone.
- As the telephone call is completed, you will be given a confirmation number. Write it down. Licensed hunters must then immediately write this confirmation number, in ink, on the line labeled “check card or confirmation number” of the tag that was validated (notched) at the place of kill.

Telephone Check Card

- If the kill is reported using the telephone checking system by a hunter who validated a tag, no telephone check card is required as long as the hunter is in possession of the carcass. However, if the carcass is transferred to the possession of another individual or left unattended, a telephone check card (see example below) must be created and kept in possession with the carcass until the carcass is processed. This telephone check card may be written on any type of paper and must include the successful hunter’s full name, the date the animal was killed, and the confirmation number. If the carcass is left unattended, this written documentation must be securely attached to the carcass.
- If the kill is reported using the telephone checking system by a hunter who is license exempt (for example, a landowner who did not have a license tag to validate at the place of kill), the successful hunter must immediately create a telephone check card (see example below). This telephone check card may be written on any type of paper and must include the successful hunter’s full name, the date the animal was killed, and the telephone confirmation number. This written documentation must be kept in possession with the carcass until the carcass is processed. If the carcass is left unattended, this written documentation must be securely attached to the carcass.

Example of a Telephone Check Card

A photograph of a piece of lined paper with handwritten text in black ink. The text is written in three lines: "John W. Doe", "November 22, 2004", and "L1234567890".

John W. Doe
November 22, 2004
L1234567890

An animal reported using the telephone checking system will require the creation of a telephone check card if:

1. The hunter is license exempt.
2. The carcass is transferred to someone else.
3. The carcass is left unattended.

The Telephone Check Card may be written on any type of paper using a pen and must include the hunter’s full name, date of kill and the telephone confirmation number.

Big Game Hunting Seasons

Bear

Bag Limits:

One per license year, at least 100 pounds live weight or 75 pounds dressed weight (all internal organs removed). **Females with cubs may not be harvested.**

Archery Bear Season

October 9–November 6 Statewide

Legal Methods and Restrictions

- Archery license required.
- Archery tackle (includes longbows, recurve, and compound bows) only.
- Crossbows may be used by disabled hunters (see General Hunting Regulations page 15).
- Arrowhead widths must be at least 7/8-inch wide or expand upon impact to 7/8-inch.
- Bows must be capable of propelling a broadhead arrow at least 125 yards.
- Unlawful to use arrows to which any drug, chemical, or toxic substance has been added or explosive head arrows.
- Unlawful to have a firearm in possession (see exception for concealed handguns on page 15).
- Unlawful to use dogs.

Muzzeloading Bear Season

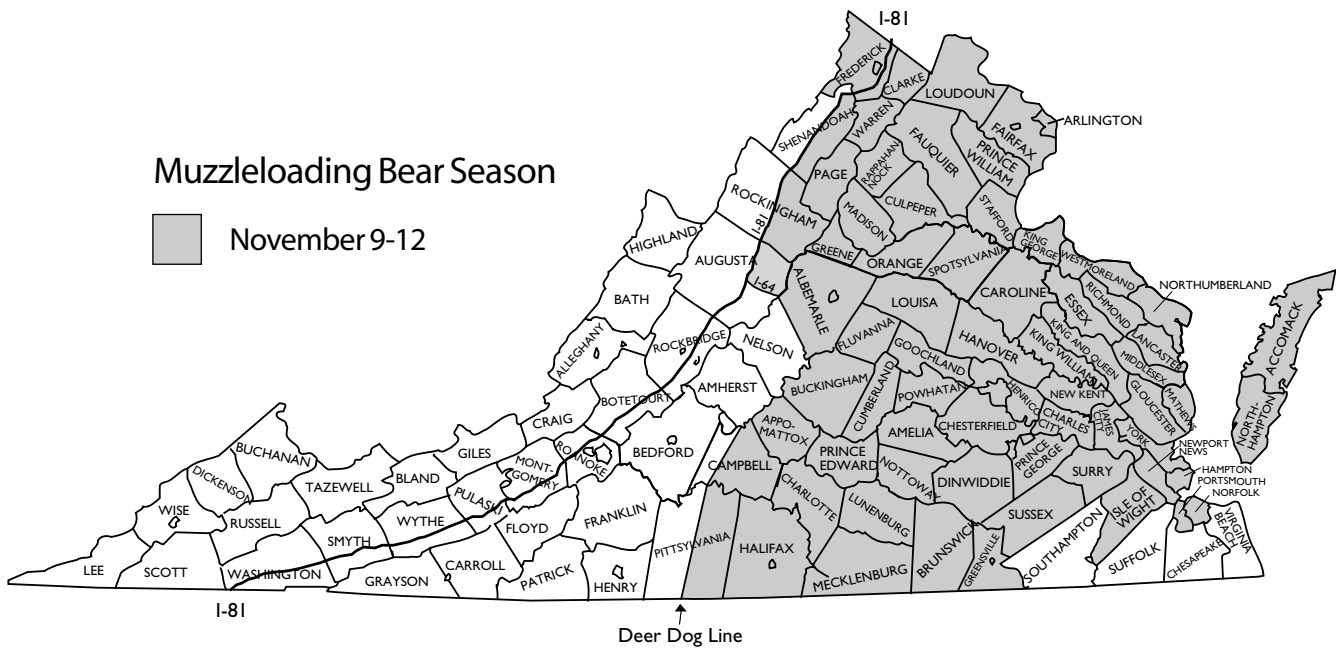
November 9–12 Certain counties, see map below

Legal Methods and Restrictions

- Muzzleloading license required.
- Muzzleloading firearms only (see Local Firearms Ordinances, pg. 17).
- Muzzleloading guns must be single shot flintlock or percussion ignition, excluding muzzleloading pistols.
- Must be .45 caliber or larger.
- Scopes permitted.
- Must be able to fire only a single bullet or sabot bullet (.38 caliber or larger projectile).
- Must be loaded from the muzzle of the gun.
- Must use at least 50 grains of black powder or black powder equivalent.
- For the purposes of transportation in a vehicle, muzzleloading firearms are considered “unloaded” when all powder has been removed from the flashpan, or the percussion cap has been removed from the nipple. For complete safety, a muzzleloader should be emptied by shooting into soft ground.
- Unlawful to have in immediate possession any firearm other than a muzzleloading gun while hunting with a muzzleloader (see exception for concealed handguns on page 15).
- Unlawful to hunt bear with dogs.
- Unlawful to use muzzleloading pistols.

These restrictions (except county ordinances) do not apply if using a muzzleloading firearm during the firearms bear season.

Special restrictions apply to specific firearms use during this season. See Legal Use of Firearms, pg. 14 and Local Firearms Ordinances, pg. 17 for details.



Firearms Bear Season

December 6–18.

- In the counties of Buchanan, Campbell (west of Norfolk Southern Railroad), Carroll, Dickenson, Floyd, Franklin, Grayson, Henry, Lee, Montgomery (south of I-81), Patrick, Pittsylvania (west of Norfolk Southern Railroad), Pulaski (south of I-81), Roanoke (south of I-81), Russell, Scott, Smyth (south of I-81), Tazewell (north of Rt. 19 and west of Rt. 16), Washington (south of I-81 or west of Rt. 19), Wise and Wythe (south of I-81), and on the Clinch Mountain and Hidden Valley Wildlife Management Areas).

November 22–January 1.

- In the counties of Albemarle, Alleghany, Amherst, Augusta, Bath, Bedford, Bland, Botetourt, Culpeper, Craig, Giles, Greene, Highland, Madison, Montgomery (north of I-81), Nelson, Page, Pulaski (north of I-81), Rappahannock, Roanoke (north of I-81), Rockbridge, Rockingham, Shenandoah, Smyth (north of I-81), Tazewell (south of Rt. 19 or east of Rt. 16), Warren, Washington (that part north of I-81 which is east of Rt. 19), Wythe (north of I-81).

Exception

- Clinch Mountain and Hidden Valley Wildlife Management Areas (see December 6-18 season)

November 1–January 1.

- In the cities of Chesapeake, Suffolk and Virginia Beach.

Closed.

- In the counties of Accomack, Amelia, Appomattox, Arlington, Brunswick, Buckingham, Campbell (east of Norfolk Southern Railroad), Caroline, Charles City, Charlotte, Chesterfield, Clarke, Cumberland, Dinwiddie, Essex, Fair-

fax, Fauquier, Fluvanna, Frederick, Gloucester, Goochland, Greensville, Halifax, Hanover, Henrico, Isle of Wight, James City, King and Queen, King George, King William, Lancaster, Loudoun, Louisa, Lunenburg, Mathews, Mecklenburg, Middlesex, New Kent, Northampton, Northumberland, Nottingham, Orange, Pittsylvania (east of Norfolk Southern Railroad), Powhatan, Prince Edward, Prince George, Prince William, Richmond, Southampton, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Surry, Sussex, Westmoreland, York and the cities of Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk and Portsmouth.

Legal Methods and Restrictions

- Modern firearms
- Archery tackle
- Muzzleloading firearms

(See Legal Use of Firearms, pg. 14 and Local Firearms Ordinances, pg. 17 for details.)

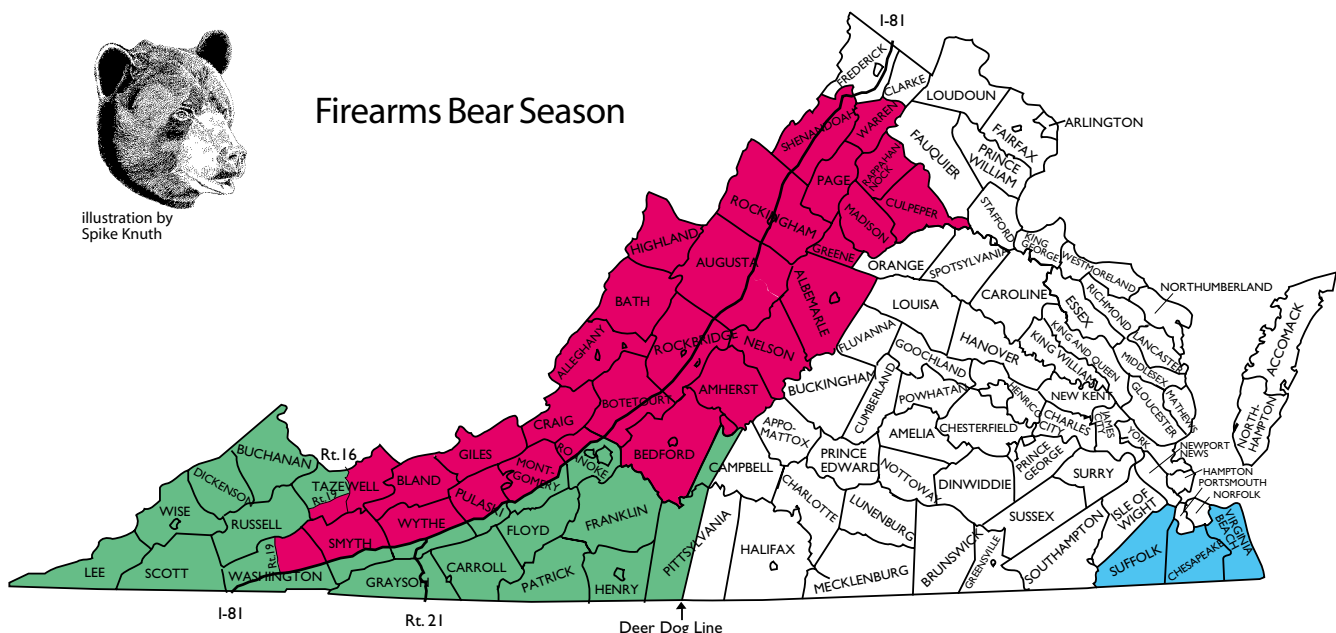
Dogs May Not Be Used to Hunt Bear:

- During the firearms deer season in the counties west of the Blue Ridge and in the counties of Amherst (west of Rt. 29), Bedford, and Nelson (west of Rt. 151).
- During the first 12 hunting days of the firearms deer season in Madison and Greene counties.
- In the counties of Campbell (west of Norfolk Southern Railroad) Carroll, Floyd, Franklin, Grayson (east of Rt. 21), Henry, Montgomery (south of I-81), Patrick, Pittsylvania (west of Norfolk Southern Railroad), Pulaski (south of I-81), Roanoke (south of I-81) and Wythe (south of I-81 and east of Rt. 21).
- When hunting during the archery and muzzleloading bear seasons.



illustration by Spike Knuth



Firearms Bear Season

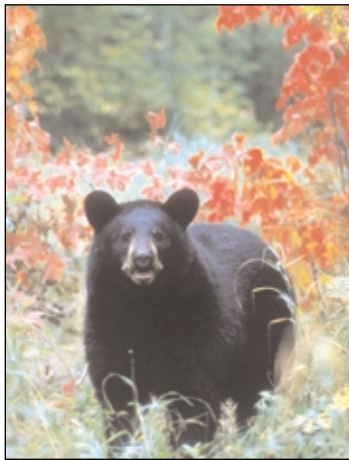


NO BLACK BEAR MAY BE TAKEN DURING THIS SEASON.

August 28–September 25 (Sundays included)
Certain counties, see map.

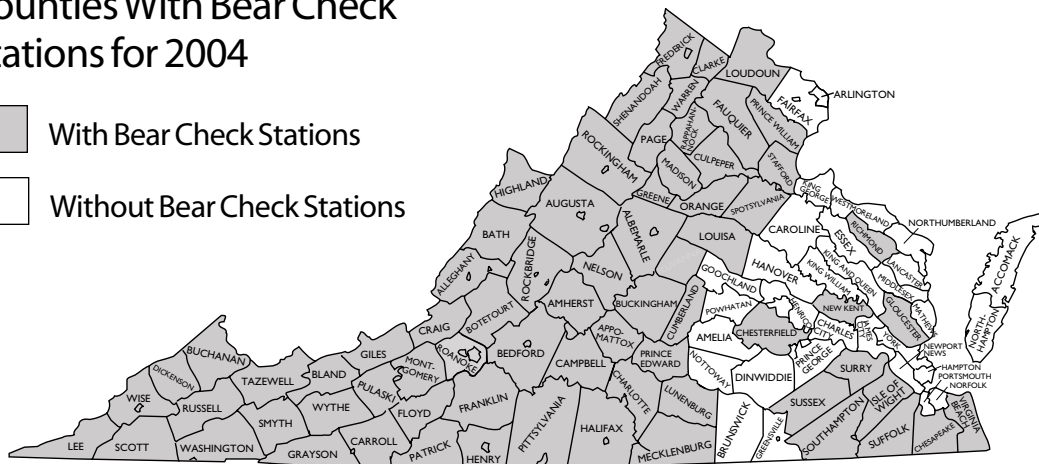
- ## Unlawful Methods:

-  August 28 – September 25
-  Closed



All bears must be checked at an official bear check station. Locations for bear check stations are available on the VDGIF Web site or by calling 1-804-367-1000. Bears cannot be checked through the telephone checking system.

 With Bear Check Stations
 Without Bear Check Stations



Deer

General Information

Bag Limits:

East of the Blue Ridge (except on National Forest lands in Amherst, Bedford, and Nelson counties)

- The bag limit for deer for all hunters shall be two a day, six a license year, three of which must be antlerless.

West of the Blue Ridge and on National Forest lands in Amherst, Bedford, and Nelson counties

- The bag limit for deer for all hunters shall be one a day, five a license year, three of which must be antlerless. Only one antlered buck may be taken during the early muzzleloading season per muzzleloader hunter.

Bag limit Exceptions

- Deer hunters, including those exempt from purchasing a license, on private land and authorized public lands may take more than the license-year bag limit by using bonus deer permits or special permits (DCAP and DMAP).

Antlered and Antlerless Deer

Antlered Deer

- Antlered bucks must have antlers visible above the hairline.

Antlerless Deer

- Antlerless deer may only be taken during designated either-sex deer hunting days during the archery season(s), muzzleloading season(s), and firearms season.
- Youth deer hunters may take one antlerless deer subject to the Special Youth Antlerless Deer Regulation (see provisions below).

Special Youth Antlerless Deer Regulation

- Deer hunters 15 years of age and under, resident or nonresident, may take one antlerless deer per license year on days other than designated either-sex deer hunting days during the muzzleloading seasons or the firearms season in all counties that have at least one either-sex deer hunting day during the firearms deer season.

Archery Deer Seasons

Early Archery Season:

October 2–November 12: Statewide

Bonus Deer Permits

- Are valid for antlerless deer only.
- Are not restricted to the number that may be purchased and used.
- Allow deer to be taken in addition to the license year bag limit.
- Do not allow daily bag limits to be exceeded.
- Are valid only on private lands and authorized public lands.
- Are not valid on National Forest and Department-owned lands.
- Are not valid in Buchanan, Dickenson, and Wise counties.
- Are valid during the archery, muzzleloading, and firearms deer seasons.
- Are valid only on designated either-sex deer hunting days.

Late Archery Seasons:

November 29–January 1:

- In all areas west of the Blue Ridge (except Clarke and Floyd counties and on private lands in Frederick County).
- In the counties (including the cities and towns within) of Amherst (west of Rt. 29), Bedford, Campbell (west of Norfolk Southern Railroad), Nelson (west of Rt. 151).
- On the Chester F. Phelps WMA and on National Forest lands in Frederick County.

December 1–January 1:

- In the cities of Chesapeake, Suffolk (east of the Dismal Swamp line), and Virginia Beach.

December 13–January 1:

- In the counties (including the cities and towns within) of Floyd, Franklin, Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania (west of Norfolk Southern Railroad).

Special Urban Archery Deer Season:

September 18–October 1 and January 3–March 26

- Within the incorporated limits of the cities of Colonial Heights, Franklin, Lynchburg, Martinsville, Radford, Richmond and the towns of Altavista, Amherst, Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Farmville, Independence, Rocky Mount, Tazewell, West Point and in Fairfax County.
- **During this season only antlerless deer may be taken.**
- Lists of properties available for hunting *are not* maintained by the Department or local governments.
- Visit www.dgif.virginia.gov/hunting/special_urban_archery.html for local restrictions, check stations, and other information.

Deer Facts

- Breeding season or the “rut” as it is commonly called for whitetails, begins in September and terminates by January in much of North America.
- In Virginia, the peak of the rut typically occurs just after mid November over most of the state and possibly a little earlier as you move east.
- Conception data for Virginia whitetails indicates that the majority of does are bred in a 2-week period.
- The gestation period for white-tailed deer averages about 200 days.
- In Virginia, the majority of fawns are born in early June.
- Healthy adult female deer will generally give birth to two fawns annually. Triplet fawns are rare, and quadruplets have been documented.

Either-Sex Deer Hunting Days

- Deer of either sex may be taken full season during all archery seasons, unless otherwise noted below.
- Only antlered (buck) deer may be taken during the early and late archery deer seasons in Buchanan County, on private lands in Dickenson County, and on private lands in Wise County. Deer of either-sex may be taken full season during the archery deer seasons on public lands (National Forest and U.S. Corp of Engineer) in Dickenson County and Wise County.

Legal Methods and Restrictions during Archery Deer Seasons:

- Archery License required.
- Archery tackle (includes longbow, recurve, and compound bow) only.
- Crossbows may be used by disabled hunters (see General Hunting Regulations, pg. 15).
- Arrowhead widths must be at least 7/8-inch wide or expand upon impact to 7/8-inch.
- Bows must be capable of propelling a broadhead arrow at least 125 yards.
- It is unlawful to use arrows to which any drug, chemical or toxic substance has been added or explosive head arrows.
- It is unlawful to have a firearm in possession (see exception for concealed handguns on page 15).
- It is unlawful to use dogs.

Muzzleloading Deer Seasons

Early Muzzleloader Seasons:

October 30–November 12:

- In all areas where deer hunting with a rifle or muzzleloading gun is permitted **east of the Blue Ridge** (unless noted in the exceptions listed below).

Exceptions:

- National Forest lands in Amherst, Bedford, and Nelson counties (see the November 6-12 season).
- Closed in the cities of Chesapeake, Suffolk (east of the Dismal Swamp line), and Virginia Beach.

- **Either-sex Deer Hunting Days:**

October 30–November 12 (full season):

- In all areas (unless otherwise noted below).
- On Occoneechee State Park.

November 6:

- On State Forest lands, State Park lands (except Occoneechee State Park), Department-owned lands, and the Philpott Reservoir.

November 6–12:

- In all areas where deer hunting with a rifle or muzzleloading gun is permitted **west of the Blue Ridge** and on National Forest lands in Amherst, Bedford, and Nelson counties.

- **Antlered Buck Restriction:**

- Only one antlered buck may be taken per muzzleloader hunter during this season.

- **Either-sex Deer Hunting Days:**

November 8:

- In all areas (unless otherwise noted below).
- On National Forest and Department-owned lands in Roanoke County.
- On National Forest lands in Amherst, Bedford, and Nelson counties.

November 6–12 (full season):

- In Floyd County and on private lands in Roanoke County.

Antlered bucks only–no either-sex deer hunting days:

- In Buchanan, Dickenson, Lee, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, and Wise Counties. Only antlered (buck) deer may be taken during the early muzzleloading season in these counties.

Late Muzzleloader Season:

December 18–January 1:

- In all areas where deer hunting with a rifle or muzzleloading gun is permitted **west of the Blue Ridge** (except Clarke County and on private lands in Frederick County).
- In the counties (including cities and towns within) of Amherst (west of Rt. 29), Bedford, Campbell (west of Norfolk Southern Railroad), Franklin, Henry, Nelson (west of Rt. 151), Patrick, and Pittsylvania (west of Norfolk Southern Railroad).
- On National Forest lands in Frederick County.
- In the cities of Chesapeake and Virginia Beach.
- **Either-sex Deer Hunting Days:**

December 27–January 1:

- In all areas west of the Blue Ridge (except Clarke County and on private lands in Frederick County) unless otherwise noted below.
- On National Forest lands in Amherst, Bedford, and Nelson counties.
- On National Forest lands in Frederick County and on National Forest and Department-owned lands in Roanoke County.
- In the cities of Chesapeake and Virginia Beach.

December 18–January 1 (full season):

- In the counties (including the cities and towns within) of Amherst (west of Rt. 29, except on National Forest lands), Bedford (except on National Forest lands), Campbell (west of Norfolk Southern Railroad), Floyd, Franklin, Henry, Nelson (west of Rt. 151, except on National Forest lands), Patrick, Pittsylvania (west of Norfolk Southern Railroad), and Roanoke (private lands only).

January 1:

- In the counties of Grayson, Lee, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, and Washington.

Antlered bucks only–no either-sex deer hunting days:

- In Buchanan, Dickenson, and Wise Counties. Only antlered (buck) deer may be taken during the late muzzleloading season in these counties.

Muzzleloading Deer Hunting for Incorporated Cities and Towns:

Deer of either sex may be taken full season during all muzzleloading seasons within the incorporated limits of any city or town in the Commonwealth that allows deer hunting (except in the counties of Buchanan, Dickenson and Wise and in the cities of Chesapeake, Suffolk and Virginia Beach).

Legal Methods and Restrictions During Muzzleloading Deer Seasons:

- Muzzleloading License required.
- Muzzleloading firearms only (see Local Firearms Ordinances, pg. 17).
- Muzzleloading guns must be single shot flintlock or percussion ignition, excluding muzzleloading pistols.
- Must be .45 caliber or larger.
- Scopes permitted.
- Must be able to fire only a single bullet or sabot bullet (.38 caliber or larger projectile).
- Must be loaded from the muzzle of the gun.
- Must use at least 50 grains of black powder or black powder equivalent.
- For the purposes of transportation in a vehicle, muzzleloading firearms are considered “unloaded” when all powder has been removed from the flashpan, or the percussion cap has been removed from the nipple. For complete safety, a muzzleloader should be emptied by shooting into soft ground.
- Unlawful to have in immediate possession any firearm other than a muzzleloading gun while hunting with a muzzleloader (see exception for concealed handguns on page 15).
- Unlawful to hunt deer with dogs.
- Unlawful to use muzzleloading pistols.

These restrictions (except county ordinances) do not apply if using a muzzleloading firearm during the firearms deer season.

Special restrictions apply to specific firearms use during this season. See Legal Use of Firearms, pg. 14 and Local Firearms Ordinance, pg. 17 for details.

More Deer Facts

- Male fawns weigh about 65 pounds live weight.
- Yearling bucks in Virginia average about 110-115 pounds, and yearling females are 10 to 15 pounds less.
- Adult males (> 2-1/2 years-of-age) average about 145 pounds live weight and adult females are about 25 to 30 pounds lighter.
- Two hundred-pound dressed weight deer are very rare in Virginia.
- Tooth replacement and wear based on the tooth eruption and wear patterns on the lower jaw is the most widely used technique for aging white-tailed deer.
- Average home range size reported for deer in the southeast vary from 146 to 1,285 acres and averages approximately 500 acres.
- Bucks generally expand their range significantly during the rut.
- White-tailed deer tend to be most active around dawn and dusk.

Firearms Deer Seasons

Seasons

November 13–January 1:

- In the counties (including the cities and towns within) of Amherst (east of Rt. 29), Campbell (east of Norfolk Southern Railroad), Culpeper (see exception for C. F. Phelps WMA below), Gloucester, Goochland (east of U.S. Route 522), Greene, Halifax, Hanover, Henrico, James City, Lancaster, Madison, Nelson (east of Rt. 151), Northumberland, Orange, Pittsylvania (east of Norfolk Southern Railroad), Rappahannock, Richmond, Spotsylvania, and Stafford, and in the City of Suffolk (west of the Dismal Swamp line).

Exceptions:

- November 13–27 on the C.F. Phelps WMA.

• Either-sex Deer Hunting Days:

November 20 and 27, and December 20–January 1:

- In all areas (unless otherwise noted below).

November 20 and December 27–January 1:

- On James River WMA.

November 20 and January 1:

- On the White Oak Mountain WMA.

Antlered bucks only–no either-sex deer hunting days:

- On the C.F. Phelps WMA.

October 1–November 30:

- In the City of Suffolk (east of the Dismal Swamp line).

• Either-sex Deer Hunting Days:

October 2 and 9, and November 24–30:

- In all areas.

November 13–January 1:

- In the counties (including the cities and towns within) of Amelia, Appomattox, Brunswick, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Dinwiddie, Fluvanna, Goochland (west of U.S. Route 522), Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Powhatan, Prince Edward, and Prince George.

• Either-sex Deer Hunting Days:

November 20 and 27, and December 31–January 1:

- In all areas (unless otherwise noted below).

November 20:

- On the Appomattox-Buckingham, Cumberland, and Prince Edward State Forests.

November 13–27:

- In the counties (including the cities and towns within) of Amherst (west of Rt. 29), Bedford, Botetourt, Campbell (west of Norfolk Southern Railroad), Grayson, Montgomery, Nelson (west of Rt. 151), Roanoke, and Warren.

• Either-sex Deer Hunting Days:

November 13–27 (full season):

- In all areas (unless otherwise noted below).

November 20–27:

- On National Forest lands in Amherst, Bedford, and Nelson.

November 20 and 26–27:

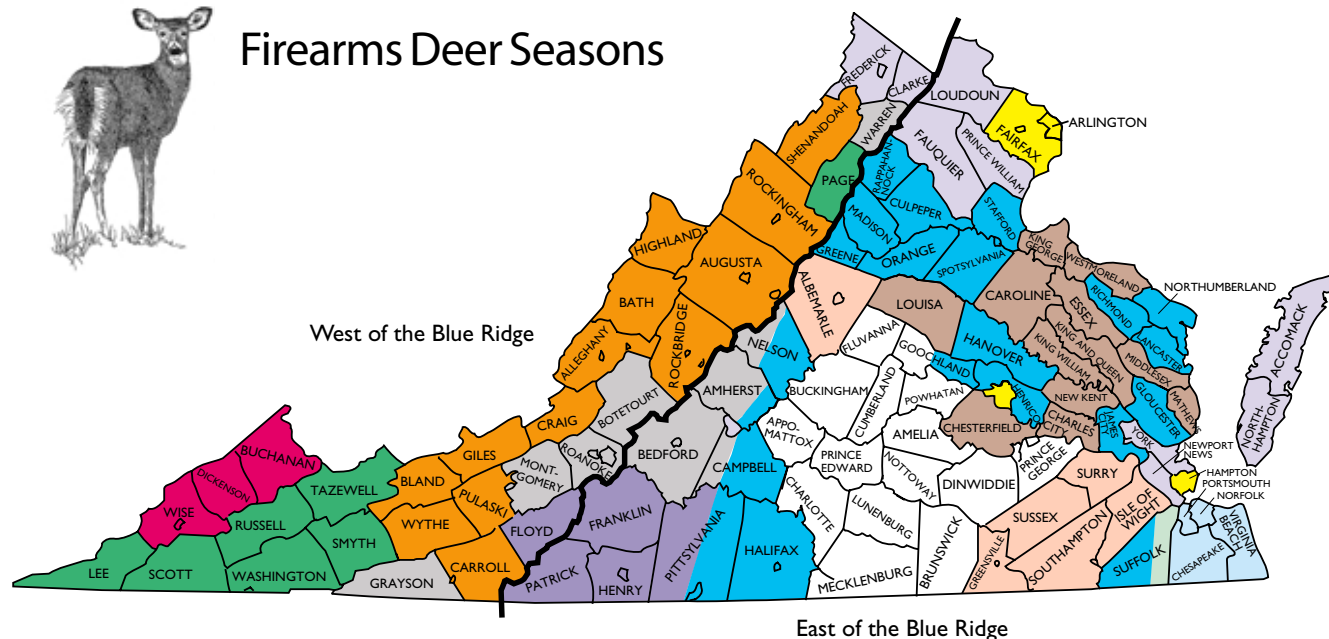
- On National Forest lands and Department-owned lands in Botetourt, Montgomery, and Roanoke.

November 20 and 27:

- On National Forest lands in Grayson and portions of Grayson Highlands State Park open to hunting and on National Forest lands in Warren.



Firearms Deer Seasons



November 13–January 1:

- In the counties (including the cities and towns within) of Albemarle, Greensville, Isle of Wight, Southampton, Surry, and Sussex.
- **Either-sex Deer Hunting Days:**
November 20 and 27, December 4–January 1:
 - In all areas (unless otherwise noted below).**Antlered bucks only–no either-sex deer hunting days:**
 - On the Carlisle Tract of the Hog Island WMA and Raged Island WMA (Special Youth Antlerless Deer Regulation applies, see pg. 46 for details).

November 13–27:

- In the counties (including the cities and towns within) of Buchanan, Dickenson, and Wise.
- **Either-sex Deer Hunting Days:**
Antlered bucks only–no either-sex deer hunting days:
 - In all areas. Only antlered (buck) deer may be taken during the firearms season in these counties.

November 13–January 1:

- In Arlington County, City of Hampton, and City of Richmond (archery only). *Note:* Local Ordinances prohibit the discharge of firearms in these areas. (See Local Firearms Ordinances, pg. 17).
- In Fairfax County (on private lands for which a special permit has been issued to the landowner, contact the Div. of Animal Control, 4500 West Ox Road, Fairfax, VA 22030 for details). No special police permit is required for archery deer hunting.
- **Either-sex Deer Hunting Days:**
November 13– January 1 (full season):
 - In all areas.

November 13– January 1:

- In the counties (including the cities and towns within) of Accomack, Clarke, Fauquier (see exception for C. F. Phelps WMA below), Frederick (see exception for National Forest lands below), Loudoun, Northampton, Prince William, and York.

Exceptions:

- November 13–27 on the C.F. Phelps WMA and National Forests lands in Frederick County.
- In the cities of Lynchburg (on private lands for which a special permit has been issued by the Chief of Police) and Newport News.
- **Either-sex Deer Hunting Days:**
November 13– January 1 (full season):
 - In all areas (unless otherwise noted below).**November 20 and January 1:**
 - On the G.R. Thompson WMA.**November 20 and 27:**
 - On National Forest lands in Frederick.**Antlered bucks only–no either-sex deer hunting days:**
 - On the C. F. Phelps WMA.

November 13–December 11:

- In the counties (including the cities and towns within) of Floyd, Franklin, Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania (west of Norfolk Southern Railroad).
- **Either-sex Deer Hunting Days:**
November 13–December 11 (full season):
 - In all areas (unless otherwise noted below).**November 20 and December 10–11:**
 - On Fairystone Farms WMA, Fairystone State Park, Philpott Reservoir, and Turkeycock Mountain WMA.

November 13–27:

- In the counties (including the cities and towns within) of Lee, Page, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, and Washington.
- **Either-sex Deer Hunting Days:**
November 20 and 26–27:
 - In all areas (unless otherwise noted below).**November 20 and 27:**
 - On National Forest lands in Page, Smyth, Tazewell, and Washington counties and on the Clinch Mountain WMA and Hidden Valley WMA.**Antlered bucks only–no either-sex deer hunting days:**
 - On National Forest lands in Lee and Scott.

November 13– January 1:

- In the counties (including the cities and towns within) Caroline, Charles City, Chesterfield, Essex, King George, King and Queen, King William, Louisa, Mathews, Middlesex, New Kent, and Westmoreland.
- **Either-sex Deer Hunting Days:**
November 20 and 27, and December 27–January 1:
 - In all areas (unless otherwise noted below).**Antlered bucks only–no either-sex deer hunting days:**
 - On the Chickahominy WMA (Special Youth Antlerless Deer Regulation applies, see pg. 25 for details).

November 13–27:

- In the counties (including cities and towns within) of Alleghany, Augusta, Bath, Bland, Carroll, Craig, Giles, Highland, Pulaski, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Shenandoah, and Wythe.
- **Either-sex Deer Hunting Days:**
November 20-27:
 - In all areas (unless otherwise noted below).**November 20, and 26– 27:**
 - On National Forest and Department-owned lands in Alleghany, Augusta, Bath, Bland, Carroll, Craig, Giles, Highland, Pulaski, Rockbridge, and Wythe.**November 20 and 27:**
 - On National Forest lands in Rockingham and Shenandoah.

October 1–November 30:

- In the cities of Chesapeake, and Virginia Beach.
- **Either-sex Deer Hunting Days:**
November 24–30:
 - in all areas

Did You Know?

- Buck antlers are true bone that grows from pedicels on the frontal bones of the skull.
- Annual antler growth generally begins in mid March to April.
- A buck's first set of antlers grows during his yearling spring and summer (e.g., at 1-1/2 years-of-age).
- The growing bone is full of blood vessels and nerves and is covered with hairy skin called "velvet."
- Growth continues through August or September. The bone then hardens, and the velvet dries up and falls off.
- Most antlered bucks in Virginia are in hard polished antler by September 15th.
- By late December or early January, the antlers fall off in response to changes in day length and decreasing testosterone levels.

Firearms Deer Hunting For Incorporated Cities and Towns

Deer of either sex may be taken full season during the firearms deer season within the incorporated limits of any city or town in the Commonwealth that allows deer hunting (except in the counties of Buchanan, Dickenson, and Wise and in the cities of Chesapeake, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach).

Legal Methods and Restrictions during Firearms Deer Seasons:

- Modern firearms.
- Archery tackle.
- Muzzleloading firearms.
- Special restrictions apply to specific firearms use during this season. See Legal Use of Firearms, pg. 14 and Local Firearms Ordinance, pg. 17 for details.

Dogs May Not Be Used For Deer Hunting:

- West of the Blue Ridge.
- East of the Blue Ridge in Bedford, Fairfax, Franklin, Henry Loudoun, Northampton, and Patrick counties, and Amherst (west of Rt. 29), Campbell (west of Norfolk Southern Railroad), Nelson (west of Rt. 151), Pittsylvania (west of Norfolk Southern Railroad), and the city of Lynchburg.
- Statewide when hunting during archery and muzzleloading seasons.
- On many military areas. Check individual Post regulations.
- On Amelia, Pettigrew, G. Richard Thompson, and C.F. Phelps Wildlife Management Areas.
- During the first 12 hunting days of the firearms deer season in Madison and Greene counties.

2004 Virginia Big Game Contest

Eastern Regional
September 11–12, 2004
Southampton County Fairground,
Franklin

State Championship and
Western Regional
September 25–26, 2004
Rockingham County Fairgrounds,
Harrisonburg

For additional information and directions go to
www.vpsa.org

Sponsored by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, Virginia Peninsula Sportsmen's Association and the Rockingham-Harrisonburg Chapter Izaak Walton League of America.

Hunters are reminded that a check card from a check station is required to enter an animal in the contest. Telephone check-in is not accepted.

Elk

- Elk of either sex, antlered or antlerless, may be taken during any open deer season using the weapons legal for deer during that season.
- Licenses, tag validation, and checking requirements for elk are the same for deer except that elk must be checked at a check station. The taking of an elk counts towards the hunter's daily and license year bag limit for deer.
- It is unlawful to destroy the identity (sex) of any harvested elk until checked. Elk may be dismembered to pack it out from the place of kill. The identity of the sex and all parts of the carcass must be present when the elk is checked.

Turkey

Bag Limits:

General: One per day, three per license year, no more than two of which may be taken in the fall.

Archery and Fall Firearms Season: Turkeys of either sex may be taken.

Spring Gobbler Season: Bearded turkeys only.

Archery Turkey Season

October 2–November 6: Statewide

- Except in counties where there is a closed firearm season on turkey.

Legal Methods and Restrictions

- Decoys and blinds may be used.
- Arrowhead widths must be at least 7/8-inch wide or expand upon impact to 7/8-inch.
- Bows must be capable of propelling a broadhead arrow at least 125 yards.
- Unlawful to have a firearm in possession (see exception for concealed handguns on page 15).
- Unlawful to use dogs when hunting with archery tackle during the archery season.

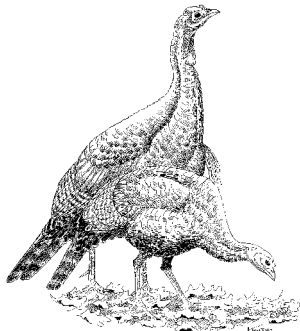


illustration by Spike Knuth

Fall Firearms Turkey Seasons



Fall Firearms Turkey Seasons

October 25–November 6, November 25 and December 6–January 1.

- In the counties of Albemarle, Alleghany, Amelia, Amherst, Appomattox, Augusta, Bath, Bedford, Bland, Botetourt, Brunswick, Buckingham, Campbell, Caroline, Carroll, Charlotte, Chesterfield, Clarke, Craig, Culpeper, Cumberland, Dickenson, Dinwiddie, Essex, Fairfax, Fauquier, Floyd, Fluvanna, Franklin, Frederick, Giles, Goochland, Grayson, Greene, Greenville, Halifax, Hanover, Henrico, Henry, Highland, King and Queen, King William, Lee, Loudoun, Louisa, Lunenburg, Madison, Mecklenburg, Montgomery, Nelson, Nottoway, Orange, Page, Patrick, Pittsylvania, Powhatan, Prince Edward, Prince William, Pulaski, Rappahannock, Roanoke, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Russell, Scott, Shenandoah, Smyth, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Tazewell, Warren, Washington, Wise, and Wythe and on Camp Peary.

October 25–November 6 and November 25.

- In the counties of Buchanan, Isle of Wight, Prince George, Southampton, Surry, and Sussex.

October 25–November 6, November 25 and December 6–18.

- In the counties of Charles City, Gloucester, James City, King George, Lancaster, Mathews, Middlesex, New Kent, Northumberland, Richmond, Westmoreland, and York (except on Camp Peary).

Closed.

- In the counties of Accomack, Arlington, and Northampton and in the cities of Chesapeake, Hampton, Newport News, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach.

continued on page 32

Legal Methods and Restrictions

- Modern firearms
- Archery tackle
- Muzzleloading firearms
- Decoys, blinds, and dogs may be used
- Unlawful to use electronic calls

(See Legal Use of Firearms, pg. 14 and Local Firearms Ordinances, pg. 17 for details)



Spring Gobbler Season

Seasons: Statewide

April 2: Youth Spring Turkey Hunt

- One-half hour before sunrise to 12 noon.
- Youth hunters must be 15 years of age or younger to participate. All youth must be accompanied and directly supervised and within sight of an adult. Adult hunters accompanying youth: must possess a valid Virginia hunting license (or be exempt from purchasing a hunting license); may assist with calling; and shall not carry or discharge a firearm.

April 9–30:

- One-half hour before sunrise until 12 noon each day.

May 2–May 14:

- One-half hour before sunrise to sunset.

Legal Methods and Restrictions

- Modern firearms
- Archery tackle
- Muzzleloading firearms
- Decoys and blinds may be used
- Unlawful to use electronic calls
- Unlawful to use dogs during spring gobbler season
- Unlawful to use or have in possession any shot larger than number 2 fine shot during spring gobbler season

(See Legal Use of Firearms, pg. 14 and Local Firearms Ordinances, pg. 17 for details)

Electronic Calls

Unlawful to take or attempt to take wild animals and wild birds with recorded or electrically amplified calls, except for crow, coyote and fox. Electronic calls may be used to take foxes and coyotes on private lands with written permission of landowner. Use of a light is permitted as long as the light is not attached to or cast from a vehicle.

Small Game Hunting Seasons

Crow

Season:

August 21–March 19 on Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday only

Crows are a federally regulated migratory species, no HIP number is required to hunt them. Crow hunting on some public lands is allowed only during certain time periods, see National Forest–Game Department Regulations on page 12.

Groundhog

Season:

Continuous open season on private lands. Groundhog hunting on some public lands is allowed only during certain time periods, see National Forest–Game Department Regulations on page 12.

Grouse

Season:

October 25–February 12 west of I-95
Continuous closed season east of I-95

Bag Limit:

Three per day

Quail and Pheasant

Season:

November 8–January 31

Bag Limits:

Quail: six per day

Pheasant: no daily or seasonal bag limit

Rabbit

Season:

November 1–February 14.

Bag Limit:

Six per day

Squirrel (Gray, Red, and Fox*)

*Fox squirrels open only in the counties west of the Blue Ridge and in the counties of Culpeper, Fauquier, Loudoun, Orange, Madison and Rappahannock during any authorized squirrel season.

Bag Limit:

All squirrels combined - six per day.

Archery Squirrel Season

Season:

October 2–November 6

Legal Methods and Restrictions

- Unlawful to use dogs when hunting with archery tackle during the squirrel archery season.
- Unlawful to have a firearm in possession (see exception for concealed handguns on page 15).

Firearms Squirrel Season

Season:

September 4–January 31.

Furbearer Hunting Seasons

Legal Methods and Restrictions

- Modern firearms
- Archery tackle
- Muzzleloading firearms
- Dogs may be used by regulation (see Hunting with Dogs, pg. 14)
- Electronic calls (See page 32)

(See Legal Use of Firearms, pg. 14 and Local Firearms pg.17 for details)

Bobcat

Season:

November 1–January 31

Bag Limit:

Two per hunting party taken between noon one day and noon the following day. Season bag limit shall be 12 bobcats in the aggregate, taken by hunting and trapping combined.

Legal Methods and Restrictions

- No bobcat pelts may be tanned, mounted, sold, traded or shipped out of state until sealed by an agent of the Department. All bobcat pelts must be sealed by April 1.

Dogs May Not Be Used:

To hunt bobcat during deer season

- In the counties of Alleghany, Amherst (west of Route 29), Augusta, Bath, Bedford, Botetourt, Campbell (west of Norfolk Southern Railroad), Clarke, Frederick, Highland, Nelson (west of Rt. 151), Page, Pittsylvania (west of Norfolk Southern Railroad), Rockbridge, Rockingham, Shenandoah, and Warren and within the boundaries of the George Washington/Jefferson National Forests.

Coyote

Season:

Continuous open season to take coyotes on private lands. Coyote hunting on some public lands is allowed only during certain time periods. See National Forest-Game Department Regulations on page.12.

Fox

Hunting With Dogs and Gun

Season:

November 1–January 31. Closed in Albemarle, Clarke, Culpeper, Fauquier (except Quantico), Loudoun, Louisa, and Rappahannock counties.

Dogs May Not Be Used:

To hunt foxes during deer season

- On the Gathright, Goshen, Highland and Little North Mountain Wildlife Management Areas and within the boundaries of the George Washington/Jefferson National Forests.

Coyote Bounty Law

While coyotes are not protected, live coyotes may not be imported or possessed in Virginia. Counties have the option of establishing their own coyote bounty system. For more information, hunters and trappers should contact their County Administrator or County Board of Supervisors.

Hunting With Dogs Only

Continuous open season statewide; closed February 1–October 31 on the George Washington/Jefferson National Forests and on Gathright, Goshen, G. Richard Thompson, Highland, Little North Mountain, and Rapidan WMAs.

Restrictions:

- To have in possession a firearm when hunting fox outside of the dog and gun fox season. Possession shall include, but not be limited to, having any firearm in or on one's person, vehicle, or conveyance.

Opossum

Seasons:

October 15–March 10 statewide

Raccoon

Season:

October 15–March 10 statewide

Bag Limit:

East of the Blue Ridge: Two per hunter taken between noon one day and noon the following day.

West of the Blue Ridge: Two per hunting party (individual or organized) taken between noon one day and noon the following day.

Chase Season

NO RACCOON MAY BE TAKEN DURING THIS SEASON (Except that raccoon may be taken during open season referenced above.)

Season:

August 1–May 31 east of the Blue Ridge (except on George Washington and Jefferson National Forests) and west of the Blue Ridge (private lands only).

Legal Methods of Chase:

- Dogs
- While chasing raccoons it is unlawful to have in possession a firearm, bow, axe, saw, or any tree climbing device during this chase season. Possession shall include, but not be limited to, having these devices in or on one's person, vehicle, or conveyance while engaged in the act of chasing.

Skunk

Season:

Continuous open season to take striped skunk on private lands. Skunk hunting on some public lands is allowed only dur-

ing certain time periods, see National Forest–Game Department Regulations on page 12. Continuous closed season for taking spotted skunks and the pelts of spotted skunks may not be sold.

Furbearer Trapping Seasons

General Regulations

Residents under 16 years of age do not need a license to trap when accompanied by any person 18 years of age or older who possesses a valid state or county license to trap. Trappers using box traps for rabbits do not need a license, but permission of the landowner is necessary. County residents 65 years of age and over do not need a license to trap on private property in county of residence. National Forest lands will be open during the regular trapping seasons. Trappers must visit all traps once each day to remove all animals caught therein. Check local ordinances before trapping near highways.

Trapping on Department-owned or controlled lands and waters is allowed under the regulations of the Board unless prohibited by posted rules. The posted rules may require written authorization to trap on some areas or may specify other restrictions.

There is a continuous open season to trap beaver, muskrat, opossum and raccoon within the incorporated limits of any city or town in the Commonwealth, and in the counties of Arlington, Chesterfield, Fairfax, Henrico, James City, Loudoun, Prince William, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Roanoke and York.

It is lawful to set traps in water from December 1 through the last day of February both dates inclusive, and at anytime within the incorporated limits of any city or town in the Commonwealth and in the counties of Arlington, Chesterfield, Fairfax, Henrico, James City, Loudoun, Prince William, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Roanoke and York, except as otherwise specifically provided by department permit or by local ordinances.

Any person setting or in possession of a steel leghold or body gripping trap or snare shall have it marked by means of a nonferrous metal tag bearing his name and address. This requirement shall not apply to landowners on their own land, nor to a bonafide tenant or lessee within the bounds of land rented or leased by him, nor to anyone transporting any such trap from its place of purchase.

The use of body gripping traps with a jaw spread in excess of 7½ inches is prohibited except when such traps are covered by water.

It is unlawful to set above the ground any body gripping trap with a jaw spread in excess of 5 inches, baited with any lure or scent likely to attract a dog.

No deadfalls or snares, except that on land snares with loops less than 12 inches in diameter with the top of the snare loop not more than 12 inches above the ground may be used on private lands with written permission of the landowner.

It is unlawful to set above the ground any steel leghold trap with teeth set upon the jaws or with a jaw spread exceeding 6 1/2 inches.

It is unlawful to willfully molest, damage, or remove any trap, or any lawfully caught bird or animal therefrom or in any way disturb traps or snares legally set by another person.

No trapping within 50 feet of a highway in Clarke, Fauquier, and Loudoun counties.

No trapping of furbearing animals within 300 yards of First Landing/Seashore State Park and the Virginia Marine Science Museum in the City of Virginia Beach.



©Rob & Ann Simpson

Trapping Seasons

Beaver

December 1–February 28 except there is a continuous open season within the incorporated limits of any city or town in the Commonwealth, and in the counties of Arlington, Chesterfield, Fairfax, Henrico, James City, Loudoun, Prince William, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Roanoke and York.

Bobcat

November 15–February 28

Bag limit: The season bag limit shall be 12 bobcats in the aggregate, taken by hunting and trapping combined.

No bobcat pelts may be tanned, mounted, sold, traded, or shipped out of state until sealed by an agent of the Department. All bobcat pelts must be sealed by April 1.

Coyote

Continuous open season.

Fox

November 15–February 28

Fox trapping is **prohibited** in Clarke (except on G. Richard Thompson WMA), Fauquier (except on Chester F. Phelps WMA and G. Richard Thompson WMA), Loudoun, and Rapahannock counties.

Mink

December 1–February 28

Muskrat

December 1–February 28 except there is a continuous open season within the incorporated limits of any city or town in the Commonwealth, and in the counties of Arlington, Chesterfield, Fairfax, Henrico, James City, Loudoun, Prince William, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Roanoke and York.

Nutria

Continuous open season

Opossum

November 15–February 28 except there is a continuous open season within the incorporated limits of any city or town in the Commonwealth, and in the counties of Arlington, Chesterfield, Fairfax, Henrico, James City, Loudoun, Prince William, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Roanoke and York.

Otter

December 1–February 28, east of the Blue Ridge
No otter trapping permitted, west of the Blue Ridge

No otter pelts may be sold, traded, or shipped out of state until sealed by an agent of the Department. All otter pelts must be sealed by April 1.

Rabbit

May be taken with box traps from **October 15–January 31** provided no traps shall be set on the lands of another without written permission of the landowner.

Raccoon

November 15–February 28 except there is a continuous open season within the incorporated limits of any city or town in the Commonwealth, and in the counties of Arlington, Chesterfield, Fairfax, Henrico, James City, Loudoun, Prince William, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Roanoke and York.

Skunk

Continuous open season for striped skunk. Continuous closed season for taking spotted skunk and the pelts of spotted skunk may not be sold.

Weasel

December 1–February 28